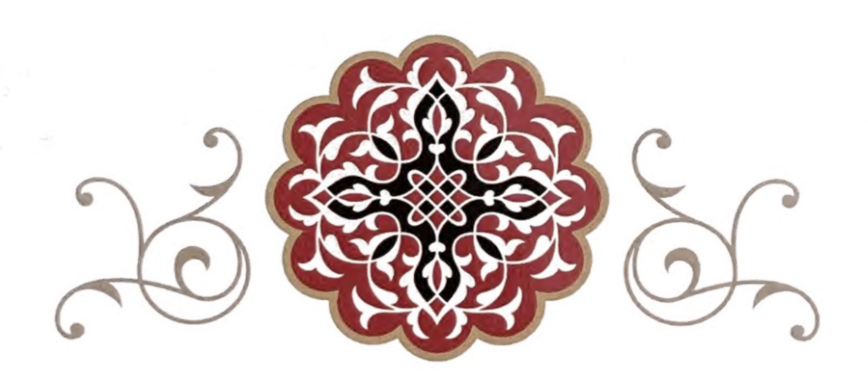
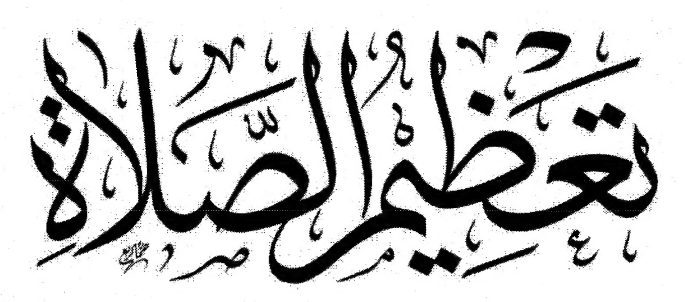


Reverence for THE ṢALĀH

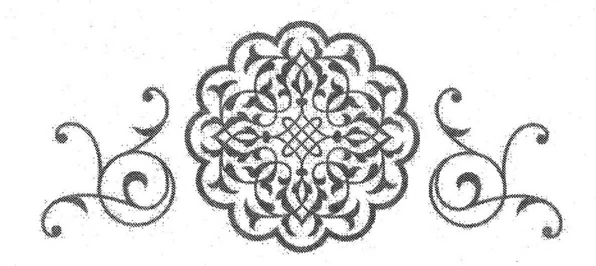


إعداد
عبد الرزاق بن عبد المحسن البدر

Shaykh 'Abdur-Razzāq Ibn 'Abdul-Muḥsin al-'Abbād al-Badr



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1. *Fiqh of Supplications & Legislative Remembrance.*
2. *Hajj & Refinement of Souls*
3. Explanation of the book, *Exemplary Principles'* by Shaykh Muḥammad ibn Ṣāliḥ al-ʿUthaymīn (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ).
4. Explanation of the book, *'the Principles of Names & Attributes'* authored by Shaykh ul-Islām ibn al-Qayyim (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ).
5. Explanation of the book, *'Good Words,'* authored by Shaykh ul-Islām ibn al-Qayyim (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ).
6. Explanation of the book, *'al-ʿAqīdah Tahaawiyyah.*

7. Explanation of the book, *'al-Fusūl: Biography of the Messenger'* by ibn Kathīr (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ).
8. Explanation of the book, *'al-Abab al-Mufrad*, by Imām al-Bukhārī (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ).

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1. His father the *Allāmah* Shaykh ʿAbdul-Muhsin al-ʿAbbād al-Badr (حَفِظَهُ الله).
2. The *Allāmah* Shaykh ʿAbdul-Azeez bin ʿAbdullāh bin Bāz (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ).
3. The *Allāmah* Shaykh Muḥammad ibn Ṣāliḥ al-ʿUthaymīn (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ).
4. Shaykh ʿAli ibn Nāsir al-Faqīhī (حَفِظَهُ الله).

TRANSLITERATION TABLE

Consonants

ء	ʼ	د	d	ض	ḍ	ك	k
ب	b	ذ	dh	ط	ṭ	ل	l
ت	t	ر	r	ظ	ẓ	م	m
ث	th	ز	z	ع	ʻ	ن	n
ج	j	س	s	غ	gh	هـ	h
ح	ḥ	ش	sh	ف	f	و	w
خ	kh	ص	ṣ	ق	q	ي	y

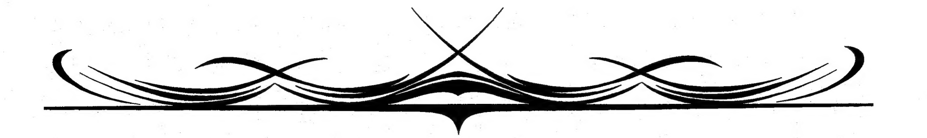
Vowels

Short	ـَ	a	ـِ	i	ـُ	u
Long	ـَا	ā	ـِي	ī	ـُو	ū

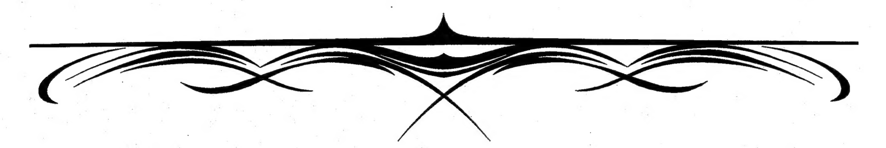
Diphthongs	ـَوْ	aw	ـَيْ	ay

Arabic Symbols & their meanings

عَزَّوَجَلَّ (Allāh) the Mighty & Sublime	سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ Glorified & Exalted is Allāh	رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ May Allāh have mercy on him	حَفِظَهُ الله May Allāh preserve him
صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ May Allāh elevate his rank & grant him peace	جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ (Allāh) His Majesty is Exalted	جَلَّ وَعَلَا (Allāh) the Sublime & Exalted	تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَىٰ (Allāh) the Blessed & Exalted
رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ May Allāh be pleased with them	رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا May Allāh be pleased with her	رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ	عَلَيْهِ ٱلصَّلَاةُ وَٱلسَّلَامُ May Allāh elevate his rank & grant him peace
			رَحِمَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ May Allāh have mercy upon them



INTRODUCTION



All praise is due to Allāh, who guided His believing servants to know Him. He opened their hearts so that they believe in Him and single Him out with worship. He mandated Ṣalāh upon them to display humility before His Majesty and exhibit modesty before His Greatness. The foremost and most crucial obligation Allāh prescribed for His servants, after Tawḥīd (Monotheism) and belief in the messengers and their messages, is Ṣalāh. Anyone who observes it consistently will enjoy its light and salvation on the Day of Judgment. On the other hand, anyone who neglects it shall be deprived of its light and salvation on the Day of Judgment.

I testify that there is no deity worthy of worship, in truth, except Allāh, who has no partner. Allāh created the heavens, the earth, and all of creation. The religion was founded, and the Qibla was set up because of this testimony of faith. It is identifying the testimony of Islām and the key to Paradise. And I testify that Muḥammad is [Allāh's] servant and Messenger, the best of His creation whose [message] is proof against Allāh's servants. Allāh

sent him as a mercy to the world, a role model for the pious, and an imitable figure leading the path of righteousness. Allāh sent him with guidance and the religion of truth. He is a bringer of good tidings and a warner before the Day of Judgment. He is the one who invites to Allāh, by His permission and an illuminating lamp. May Allāh elevate his rank, his family, companions, and wives and grant them all peace.

To proceed,

The Ṣalāh is the most crucial affair in a Muslim's life. To preserve one's religion, one has to observe it consistently; otherwise, one would be negligent of the Ṣalāh, let alone other acts of worship. It is the pillar of Islām, as it is soundly reported from the Prophet (صَلَّىٰ ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيۡهِ وَعَلَىٰٓ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ). At the same time, the remaining deeds serve as the axis of support. Similarly, a tent without a pillar is useless. The Ṣalāh is the criterion for accepting all other deeds; if it is rejected [by Allāh], all other deeds will be rejected. It is the first obligation ever in Islām and the last act of worship to wither. So, if one is negligent to the first and the last thing in Islām, then one will lose everything in-between.

Inadequate observance of the Ṣalāh that lacks adherence to its prescribed form in the manner performed by the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّىٰ ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيۡهِ وَعَلَىٰٓ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) will derail one's religion. It will invalidate all deeds, cause misconduct in one's religious and worldly affairs. Ibn al-Qayyim noted,

> **"Undoubtedly, the Ṣalāh inherits joy in the eyes of the lovers of Allāh and enjoyment for the monotheists. It is the garden of the worshipers, the pleasure of the sincere,**

and the criterion of the truthful. It brings Allāh's mercy to His believing servants. Allāh guided them to the Ṣalāh and delivered it at the hands of His Messenger out of mercy and kindness. So that the people would obtain the honor of His kindness and draw themselves closer to Him, not because He needs them but rather as His favor upon them. Ṣalāh is an act of worship for both the heart and the body. A complete person perfects it at both levels to the extent he feels happy and joyful whenever he meets Allāh [during Ṣalāh]. Because he will enjoy His love and experience the delight of standing before Him. In such a condition, the individual is immensely absorbed in Ṣalāh to the extent he is indifferent to anything else. Thinking of none but his deity to pay Him due worship by the heart and the body, all to pray in the manner pleasing to Allāh The Almighty."[1]

Every Muslim is expected to pay significant consideration for this obligation that connects him with his Lord Almighty. Such that he adequately observes its requirements, obligations, conditions, and all that Allāh mandated thereof. One should observe it with the utmost humility and serenity inwardly and outwardly to achieve a great reward. It is related in Saḥīḥ Muslim that ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān heard the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰٓ آلِهِۦ وَسَلَّمَ) saying,

[1] 'Asrār al-Ṣalāh by ibn al-Qayyim: 228.

مَا مِنْ امْرِئٍ مُسْلِمٍ تَحْضُرُهُ صَلَاةٌ مَكْتُوبَةٌ، فَيُحْسِنُ وُضُوءَهَا وَخُشُوعَهَا، إِلَّا كَانَتْ كَفَّارَةً لِمَا قَبْلَهَا مِنَ الذُّنُوبِ مَا لَمْ يُؤْتِ كَبِيرَةً، وَذَلِكَ الدَّهْرَ كُلَّهُ.

"When the time for a prescribed prayer comes, if any Muslim observes proper ablution, humility, and bowing, it will be an expiation for his past sins. So long as he has not committed a major sin, and that applies for all time."[2]

In this treatise, there is a collection of admonitions and pieces of advice concerning this sublime act of worship. The central part of this treatise is made of several Friday sermons. It is also complemented with some precious notes of Shaykh al-Islām ibn Taymiyyah and his student ibn al-Qayyim (may Allāh have mercy upon them). I hope the content of this treatise follows the guidelines of the righteous Salaf concerning bringing attention to the importance of Ṣalāh and its status. It is related in *Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*[3] that al-'Aswad said,

كُنَّا مَعَ عَائِشَةَ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا فَذَكَرْنَا الْمُوَاظَبَةَ عَلَى الصَّلَاةِ وَالتَّعْظِيمَ لَهَا، قَالَتْ: لَمَّا مَرِضَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَرَضَهُ الَّذِي مَاتَ فِيهِ، فَحَضَرَتِ الصَّلَاةُ، فَأُذِّنَ؛ فَقَالَ: مُرُوا أَبَا

[2] N. (228).

[3] N. (633).

بَكْرٍ فَلْيُصَلِّ بِالنَّاسِ؛ فَقِيلَ لَهُ: إِنَّ أَبَا بَكْرٍ رَجُلٌ أَسِيفٌ، إِذَا قَامَ فِي مَقَامِكَ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ أَنْ يُصَلِّيَ بِالنَّاسِ؛ وَأَعَادَ، فَأَعَادُوا لَهُ؛ فَأَعَادَ الثَّالِثَةَ، فَقَالَ: إِنَّكُنَّ صَوَاحِبُ يُوسُفَ مُرُوا أَبَا بَكْرٍ فَلْيُصَلِّ بِالنَّاسِ، فَخَرَجَ أَبُو بَكْرٍ فَصَلَّى فَوَجَدَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللهُ وَعَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مِنْ نَفْسِهِ خِفَّةً، فَخَرَجَ يُهَادَى بَيْنَ رَجُلَيْنِ كَأَنِّي أَنْظُرُ رِجْلَيْهِ تَخُطَّانِ مِنَ الْوَجَعِ، فَأَرَادَ أَبُو بَكْرٍ أَنْ يَتَأَخَّرَ، فَأَوْمَأَ إِلَيْهِ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَنْ مَكَانَكَ ثُمَّ أُتِيَ بِهِ حَتَّى جَلَسَ إِلَى جَنْبِهِ-قِيلَ لِلْأَعْمَشِ: وَكَانَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يُصَلِّي، وَأَبُو بَكْرٍ يُصَلِّي بِصَلَاتِهِ، وَالنَّاسُ يُصَلُّونَ بِصَلَاةِ أَبِي بَكْرٍ؟ فَقَالَ بِرَأْسِهِ: نَعَمْ؛ فَسَاقَتْ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا فِي هَذَا الْمَجْلِسِ الْمُبَارَكِ الْقَائِمِ عَلَى تَذَاكُرِ شَأْنِ الصَّلَاةِ وَالْمُوَاظَبَةِ عَلَيْهَا وَتَعْظِيمِهَا هَذِهِ الْقِصَّةَ الْعَظِيمَةَ الْمُؤَثِّرَةَ لَسَيِّدِ وَلَدِ آدَمَ، وَقُدْوَةِ الْعَالَمِينَ، وَكَيْفَ أَنَّهُ فِي مَرَضِ وِفَاتِهِ عِنْدَمَا وَجَدَ مِنْ نَفْسِهِ خِفَّةً خَرَجَ إِلَيْهَا يُهَادَى بَيْنَ رِجْلَيْنِ تَخُطُّ رِجْلَاهُ الْأَرْضَ مِنَ الْوَجَعِ مُعَظِّمًا لِلصَّلَاةِ مُحَافِظًا عَلَيْهَا، وَفِي هَذَا مِنَ التَّرْبِيَةِ وَالتَّعْظِيمِ بِالْقُدْوَةِ مَا لَا يَخْفَى.

“We were with ʿĀʾisha discussing the consistent observance and reverence for the Ṣalāh. She said, 'When Allāh's Messenger (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) fell sick with

the fatal illness that claimed his life, and when the time of the prayer became due, and Adhan was pronounced, he said, 'Tell Abū Bakr to lead the people in Ṣalāh.' He was told that Abū Bakr was a softhearted man and would not lead in his place. The Prophet (صَلَّىٰ ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيۡهِ وَعَلَىٰٓ آلِهِۦ وَسَلَّمَ) gave the same order again, but he was given the same reply. He gave the order for the third time and said, 'You (women) are like the females [mentioned in the story of] Joseph. Tell Abū Bakr to lead the prayer.' So Abū Bakr came out to lead the prayer. In the meantime, the Prophet (صَلَّىٰ ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيۡهِ وَعَلَىٰٓ آلِهِۦ وَسَلَّمَ) improved a bit, and he came out with the help of two men, one on each side. As if I was observing his legs dragging on the ground owing to the disease. Abū Bakr wanted to retreat, but the Prophet (صَلَّىٰ ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيۡهِ وَعَلَىٰٓ آلِهِۦ وَسَلَّمَ) beckoned him to remain at his place. The Prophet (صَلَّىٰ ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيۡهِ وَعَلَىٰٓ آلِهِۦ وَسَلَّمَ) was brought until he sat beside Abū Bakr." Al-A`mash was asked, "Was the Prophet (صَلَّىٰ ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيۡهِ وَعَلَىٰٓ آلِهِۦ وَسَلَّمَ) praying and Abū Bakr following him, and were the people following Abū Bakr in that prayer?" Al-A`mash replied in the affirmative with a nod of his head."

ʿĀʾishah (may Allāh be pleased with her) brought this story in such a blessed gathering that discussed the status of Ṣalāh and the excellence of observing it consistently. She mentioned this tremendous and influential story of the best human being and the role model for the world. During the illness that claimed the Prophet's (صَلَّىٰ ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيۡهِ وَعَلَىٰٓ آلِهِۦ وَسَلَّمَ) life, he felt a little easiness, so he sprung up to attend prayer with the help of two men holding him,

one on each side. He was dragging his legs out of the intense pain, all to revere Ṣalāh and observe it [in congregation]. This unmistakably offers an excellent educational example.

I ask Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, to bless this treatise and make it sincere and beneficial for His servants. I also ask Allāh The Almighty to reform the affairs of all Muslims. May He foster their hearts with piety, guide them to sincere repentance from all sins, and inspire them to pay Ṣalāh great attention and reverence. I ask Allāh to bless Muslims to adhere to the Sharia of Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, and protect them against the evil schemes of the enemy. Indeed, Allāh answers the supplication, and He is our hope for acceptance. He suffices us, and He is the Best Disposer of affairs. May Allāh's peace and blessings be upon His servant and Messenger, our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his companions.

Written by: ʿAbdur-Razzāq ibn ʿAbdul-Muḥsin al-ʿAbbād al-Badr 25th Muharram 1434 A.H.



THE ṢALĀH IS OBLIGATED UPON ALL THE PROPHETS



One of the most evident aspects of the crucial status of the Ṣalāh is that Allāh obligated it upon all the prophets (peace be upon them). Not to mention how Allāh narrated to us how those prophets revered it. The Qur'ān testifies to this fact in many verses. For example:

In the story of Yūnus (Jonah) (peace be upon him), Allāh said after the whale swallowed Jonah,

﴿ فَلَوْلَآ أَنَّهُۥ كَانَ مِنَ ٱلْمُسَبِّحِينَ ١٤٣ لَلَبِثَ فِى بَطْنِهِۦٓ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ ١٤٤ ﴾

"And had he not been of those who exalt Allāh, He would have remained inside its belly until the Day they are resurrected." [Sūrah Al-Ṣāfāt (37): 143-144]

Ibn ʿAbbās commented,

مِنَ الْـمُصَلِّينَ، وَعَنْ سَعِيدِ بْنِ جُبَيْـرٍ وَقَتَادَة مِثْلُهُ

"Had he not been of those who pray." Saʿīd ibn Jubayr and Qatādah stated similarly.[4]

In the story of Ibrahim (Abraham), when he relocated his son Ismāʿīl (Ishmael) to a deserted land, he supplicated to Allāh saying,

﴿ رَّبَّنَآ إِنِّيٓ أَسۡكَنتُ مِن ذُرِّيَّتِي بِوَادٍ غَيۡرِ ذِي زَرۡعٍ عِندَ بَيۡتِكَ ٱلۡمُحَرَّمِ رَبَّنَا لِيُقِيمُواْ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ ﴾

"Our Lord, I have settled some of my descendants in an uncultivated valley near Your sacred House, our Lord, that they may establish prayer." [Sūrah Ibrahim (14):37]

He mentioned no other deed but prayer, thus proving that nothing supersedes or equalizes Ṣalāh. Allāh The Almighty said,

﴿ وَإِذۡ بَوَّأۡنَا لِإِبۡرَٰهِيمَ مَكَانَ ٱلۡبَيۡتِ أَن لَّا تُشۡرِكۡ بِي شَيۡـٔٗا وَطَهِّرۡ بَيۡتِيَ لِلطَّآئِفِينَ وَٱلۡقَآئِمِينَ وَٱلرُّكَّعِ ٱلسُّجُودِ ٢٦ ﴾

[4] Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī: (21/109)

“And [mention, O Muḥammad], when We designated for Abraham the site of the House, [saying], "Do not associate anything with Me and purify My House for those who perform Tawaf and those who stand [in prayer] and those who bow and prostrate.” [Sūrah Al-Ḥajj (22):26]

Another one of his supplications was,

﴿ رَبِّ ٱجْعَلْنِي مُقِيمَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ وَمِن ذُرِّيَّتِي ۚ رَبَّنَا وَتَقَبَّلْ دُعَآءِ ﴿٤٠﴾ ﴾

“My Lord, make me an establisher of prayer, and [many] from my descendants. Our Lord, and accept my supplication.” [Sūrah Ibrahim (14):40]

In the case of Ismā‘īl (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ), Allāh said,

﴿ وَٱذْكُرْ فِي ٱلْكِتَٰبِ إِسْمَٰعِيلَ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ صَادِقَ ٱلْوَعْدِ وَكَانَ رَسُولًا نَّبِيًّا ﴿٥٤﴾ وَكَانَ يَأْمُرُ أَهْلَهُۥ بِٱلصَّلَوٰةِ وَٱلزَّكَوٰةِ ﴾

“And mention in the Book, Ishmael. Indeed, he was true to his promise, and he was a messenger and a prophet. And he used to enjoin on his people prayer and Zakah.” [Sūrah Maryam (19):54-55]

In the case of Ishāq (Isaac) and his offspring, Allāh said,

﴿ وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُۥٓ إِسْحَٰقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ نَافِلَةً ۖ وَكُلًّا جَعَلْنَا صَٰلِحِينَ ﴿٧٢﴾ وَجَعَلْنَٰهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا وَأَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْهِمْ فِعْلَ ٱلْخَيْرَٰتِ وَإِقَامَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ وَإِيتَآءَ ٱلزَّكَوٰةِ ۖ ﴾

"And We gave him Isaac and Jacob also, and all [of them] We made righteous. And We made them leaders guiding by Our command. And We inspired to them the doing of good deeds, the establishment of prayer, and giving of Zakah." [Sūrah Al-ʾAnbiyāʾ (21):72-73]

In the story of Shu`ayb (Jethro) (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰٓ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ), when he prohibited his people from worshiping other than Allāh and devaluing their weights and measures, they replied,

﴿ يَٰشُعَيْبُ أَصَلَوٰتُكَ تَأْمُرُكَ أَن نَّتْرُكَ مَا يَعْبُدُ ءَابَآؤُنَآ ﴾

"O Shu'ayb does your prayer command you that we should leave what our fathers worship." [Sūrah Hūd (11):87]

This proves that they witnessed him paying reverence for the Ṣalāh more than anything else.[5]

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[5] Shaykh al-Saʿdī commented on this verse as follows, "Ṣalāh has been obligated upon all the previous prophets. It is one of the most excellent deeds. Even Non-Muslims, they give it priority over all other deeds. Ṣalāh prohibits from immorality and wrongdoing. It is the scale of faith and its laws. By

Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, brought Mūsā (Moses) (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) close to Him and confided in Him. Ṣalāh was the first thing Allāh obligated upon him after the command to worship Him. It was the only obligation explicitly mentioned. Allāh, Exalted and Glorified, spoke with Mūsā directly without an interpreter communicating His words,

﴿فَٱسْتَمِعْ لِمَا يُوحَىٰٓ ۝١٣ إِنَّنِىٓ أَنَا ٱللَّهُ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّآ أَنَا۠ فَٱعْبُدْنِى وَأَقِمِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ لِذِكْرِىٓ ۝١٤﴾

"So listen to what is being revealed. Indeed, I am Allāh. There is no deity except Me, so worship Me and establish prayer for My remembrance." [Sūrah Taha (20):13-14]

This proves the great status of prayer and its excellence above all other deeds. Because Allāh started with it in his conversation with His addressee. Also, the first thing Mūsā commanded his people, the Children of Israel, was to observe the Ṣalāh after they believed in him. Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, said,

﴿وَأَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰ وَأَخِيهِ أَن تَبَوَّءَا لِقَوْمِكُمَا بِمِصْرَ بُيُوتًا وَٱجْعَلُوا۟ بُيُوتَكُمْ قِبْلَةً وَأَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ ۗ﴾

establishing it, one's affairs will be set straight or it would tumble were he to abandon it."

"And We inspired Moses and his brother, "Settle your people in Egypt in houses and make your houses [facing the] Qibla and establish prayer." [Sūrah Yūnus (10):87]

In the story, when Dāwūd (David) sinned and desired to repent, he found no resort but to observe Ṣalāh. Allāh The Almighty said,

﴿ فَٱسْتَغْفَرَ رَبَّهُۥ وَخَرَّ رَاكِعًا وَأَنَابَ ۩ ﴿٢٤﴾ ﴾

"so he asked his Lord for forgiveness, fell down on his knees, and repented." [Sūrah Ṣad (38):24]

In the story of Sulaymān (Solomon, son of David), when the horses were exhibited before him late in the day, he was distracted and missed the `Asr prayer. He was remorseful and punished himself by depriving himself of the sight of the horses that distracted him from catching Ṣalāh in its due time. Allāh The Almighty narrated this story as follows,

﴿ وَوَهَبْنَا لِدَاوُۥدَ سُلَيْمَـٰنَ ۚ نِعْمَ ٱلْعَبْدُ ۖ إِنَّهُۥٓ أَوَّابٌ ﴿٣٠﴾ إِذْ عُرِضَ عَلَيْهِ بِٱلْعَشِىِّ ٱلصَّـٰفِنَـٰتُ ٱلْجِيَادُ ﴿٣١﴾ فَقَالَ إِنِّىٓ أَحْبَبْتُ حُبَّ ٱلْخَيْرِ عَن ذِكْرِ رَبِّى حَتَّىٰ تَوَارَتْ بِٱلْحِجَابِ ﴿٣٢﴾ رُدُّوهَا عَلَىَّ ۖ فَطَفِقَ مَسْحًۢا بِٱلسُّوقِ وَٱلْأَعْنَاقِ ﴿٣٣﴾ ﴾

"We gave David Solomon. He was an excellent servant who always turned to Allāh. When well-bred light-footed horses were paraded before him near the close of

the day, he kept saying, 'My love of fine things is part of my remembering my Lord!' until [the horses] disappeared from sight- 'Bring them back!' [he said] and started to stroke their legs and necks." [Sūrah Ṣad (38):30-33]

Ibn Kathīr (may Allāh have mercy upon him) commented,

ذَكَرَ غَيْرُ وَاحِدٍ مِنَ السَّلَفِ وَالْـمُفَسِّرِينَ أَنَّـهُ اشْتَغَلَ بِعرضِهَا حَتَّى فَاتَ وَقْتُ صَلَاةِ الْعَصْرِ، وَالَّذِي يُقْطَعُ بِهِ أَنَّـهُ لَمْ يَـتْرُكْـهَا عَمَدًا، بَلْ نِسْيَانًا كَمَا شُغِلَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَوْمَ الْـخَنْدقِ عَنْ صَلَاةِ الْعَصْرِ حَتَّى صَلَّاهَا بَعْدَ الْغُرُوبِ.

"A considerable number of Qur᾿ān commentators and early scholars of the Salaf maintained that he Sulaymān was distracted by the exhibition of the horses till he missed the `Asr prayer. But has had not missed it intentionally. Instead, he forgot it just as the Prophet (ﷺ) was distracted from praying the `Asr prayer during the battle of Ditch (*al-Khandaq*), and he prayed it after sunset."[6]

In the story of Zakariyya (Zachariah) (ﷺ), Allāh said,

[6] Tafsīr ibn Kathīr: (7/65).

﴿ فَنَادَتْهُ ٱلْمَلَـٰٓئِكَةُ وَهُوَ قَآئِمٌ يُصَلِّى فِى ٱلْمِحْرَابِ ﴾

"The angels called out to him while he stood praying in the sanctuary." [Sūrah ʾĀl-ʿImrān (3):39]

Allāh narrated the story when `Isa (Jesus) (صَلَّىٰ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰٓ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) spoke as in infant,

﴿ قَالَ إِنِّى عَبْدُ ٱللَّهِ ءَاتَىٰنِىَ ٱلْكِتَـٰبَ وَجَعَلَنِى نَبِيًّا ﴿٣٠﴾ وَجَعَلَنِى مُبَارَكًا أَيْنَ مَا كُنتُ وَأَوْصَـٰنِى بِٱلصَّلَوٰةِ وَٱلزَّكَوٰةِ مَا دُمْتُ حَيًّا ﴿٣١﴾ ﴾

"I am a servant of Allāh. He has granted me the Scripture; made me a prophet; made me blessed wherever I may be. He commanded me to pray, to give alms as long as I live." [Sūrah Maryam (19):30-31]

Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, narrated about the prophets of the Children of Israel,

﴿ ۞ وَلَقَدْ أَخَذَ ٱللَّهُ مِيثَـٰقَ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ وَبَعَثْنَا مِنْهُمُ ٱثْنَىْ عَشَرَ نَقِيبًا ۖ وَقَالَ ٱللَّهُ إِنِّى مَعَكُمْ ۖ لَئِنْ أَقَمْتُمُ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتَيْتُمُ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَءَامَنتُم بِرُسُلِى ﴾

"Allāh took a pledge from the Children of Israel. We made twelve leaders arise among them, and God said, 'I am with you: if you keep up the prayer, pay the prescribed alms, believe in My messengers." [Sūrah Al-Mā'idah (5):12]

Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, relayed the story of each Prophet separately and described them as follows,

﴿ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَنۡعَمَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيۡهِم مِّنَ ٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ مِن ذُرِّيَّةِ ءَادَمَ وَمِمَّنۡ حَمَلۡنَا مَعَ نُوحٖ وَمِن ذُرِّيَّةِ إِبۡرَٰهِيمَ وَإِسۡرَٰٓءِيلَ وَمِمَّنۡ هَدَيۡنَا وَٱجۡتَبَيۡنَآۚ إِذَا تُتۡلَىٰ عَلَيۡهِمۡ ءَايَٰتُ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِ خَرُّواْۤ سُجَّدٗا وَبُكِيّٗا ۩ ٥٨ ﴾

"These were the prophets Allāh blessed- from the seed of Adam. Those We carried in the Ark with Noah, from the seed of Abraham, Israel, and those We guided and chose. When the revelations of the Lord of Mercy were recited to them, they fell to their knees and wept." [Sūrah Maryam (19):58]

Allāh informed us that the resort of all the prophets was Ṣalāh, as they used to worship Allāh and seek closeness to Him through it. Then Allāh The Almighty said,

﴿ ۞ فَخَلَفَ مِنۢ بَعۡدِهِمۡ خَلۡفٌ أَضَاعُواْ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَٱتَّبَعُواْ ٱلشَّهَوَٰتِۖ فَسَوۡفَ يَلۡقَوۡنَ غَيًّا ٥٩ ﴾

“but there came after them generations who neglected prayer and were driven by their own desires. These are going to mee evil;” [Sūrah Maryam (19):59]

meaning a valley in Hellfire.[7]

The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) relayed to us that the prophets (peace be upon them) before him has been observing the five daily prayers where the Prophet (ﷺ) prayed behind Gabriel. Ibn ʿAbbās (رضي الله عنه and his father) reported that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said,

أَمَّنِي جِبْرِيلُ عِنْدَ الْبَيْتِ مَرَّتَيْنِ، صَلَّى بِيَ الظُّهْرَ حِينَ مَالَتِ الشَّمْسُ قَدْرَ الشِّرَاكِ، وَصَلَّى بِيَ الْعَصْرَ حِينَ كَانَ ظِلُّ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مِثْلَهُ، وَصَلَّى الْمَغْرِبَ حِينَ أَفْطَرَ الصَّائِمُ، وَصَلَّى الْعِشَاءَ حِينَ غَابَ الشَّفَقُ، وَصَلَّى بِيَ الْفَجْرَ حِينَ حُرِّمَ الطَّعَامُ وَالشَّرَابُ عَلَى الصَّائِمِ، وَصَلَّى بِيَ الْغَدَ الظُّهْرَ حِينَ كَانَ ظِلُّ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مِثْلَهُ، وَصَلَّى بِيَ الْعَصْرَ حِينَ صَارَ ظِلُّ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مِثْلَيْهِ، وَصَلَّى بِيَ الْمَغْرِبَ حِينَ أَفْطَرَ الصَّائِمُ، وَصَلَّى بِيَ الْعِشَاءَ حِينَ ذَهَبَ ثُلُثُ اللَّيْلِ، وَصَلَّى بِيَ الْغَدَاةَ بَعْدَمَا أَسْفَرَ، ثُمَّ الْتَفَتْ إِلَيَّ؛ فَقَالَ: يَا مُحَمَّدُ؟ الْوَقْتُ فِيمَا بَيْنَ هَذَيْنِ الْوَقْتَيْنِ، هَذَا وَقْتُ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ قَبْلَكَ.

[7] Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī: (188/217-218).

"Gabriel led me in prayer twice at the house (i.e., the Ka'bah). He prayed Ẓuhr prayer with me when the sun had passed the meridian to the extent of the thong of a sandal. He prayed `Asr prayer with me when the shadow of everything was as long as itself. He then prayed Maghrib prayer with me when one who is fasting breaks the fast. When the twilight had ended, he prayed `Ishā' prayer with me. As the food and drink become forbidden to one who is keeping the fast, He prayed Fajr prayer with me. On the following day, he prayed Ẓuhr prayer with me when his shadow was as long as himself; he prayed `Asr prayer with me when his shadow was twice as long as himself; he prayed Maghrib prayer at the time when one who is fasting breaks the fast; he prayed `Ishā' prayer with me when about a third of the night had passed; he prayed Fajr prayer with me when there was a fair amount of light. Then turning to me, he said: Muḥammad, this is the time observed by the prophets before you."

This ḥadīth is recorded by al-Mirwazī in his book '*Ta'ẓīm Qadr as-Ṣalāh,*' number (29)[8]. I relied on it to draw the above points. May Allāh guide us to revere the Ṣalāh and observe it adequately, for Indeed He accepts the supplication.

[8] Related by Ahmad (3322), Abū Dāwūd (393), and al-Tirmidhī (149). It is graded as sound in 'Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi'' by al-Albānī (1402).



ADHERE TO THE ṢALĀH



One of the most dramatic and severe tragedies experienced by this nation is the death of the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ). Allāh blessed this nation with his mission. He was their guide to Paradise and to every virtue. Allāh said,

﴿لَّقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ ٱللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَٱلْيَوْمَ ٱلْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ ٱللَّهَ كَثِيرًا ﴿٢١﴾﴾

> **"Truly, they are a good example for you [believers] to follow, a good example for those who fear God and the Last Day. If anyone turns away, [remember] God is self-sufficing and worthy of all praise."** [Sūrah Al-Aḥzāb (33):21]

This tragic event is full of lessons that we must heed. The main issue is the Ṣalāh and its status. It is an efficient and useful lesson

to derive from such a severe event, namely the death of the Prophet (صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَعَلَىٰآلِهِۦوَسَلَّمَ). The last congregational Ṣalāh, our Prophet (صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَعَلَىٰآلِهِۦوَسَلَّمَ) observed, was the Ẓuhr on a Thursday. After he concluded his Ṣalāh, his ailment aggravated to the extent he could not leave out to attend the congregational prayer. So, he stayed home for three days: Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Abū Bakr (رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُ) filled his place during this period. On the Fajr prayer of Monday, the day he died, he unveiled the drapes of his room to check on his Companions. It was his last time to see them; and how tragic it was.

Al-Bukhārī and Muslim[9] related on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik (رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُ) reported,

أَنَّ أَبَا بَكْرٍ كَانَ يُصَلِّي لَهُمْ فِي وَجَعِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ الَّذِي تُوُفِّيَ فِيهِ حَتَّى إِذَا كَانَ يَوْمُ الاِثْنَيْنِ وَهُمْ صُفُوفٌ فِي الصَّلَاةِ، فَكَشَفَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ سِتْرَ الْحُجْرَةِ يَنْظُرُ إِلَيْنَا، وَهُوَ قَائِمٌ كَأَنَّ وَجْهَهُ وَرَقَةُ مُصْحَفٍ، ثُمَّ تَبَسَّمَ يَضْحَكُ، فَهَمَمْنَا أَنْ نَفْتَتِنَ مِنَ الْفَرَحِ بِرُؤْيَةِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، فَنَكَصَ أَبُو بَكْرٍ عَلَى عَقِبَيْهِ لِيَصِلَ الصَّفَّ وَظَنَّ أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ خَارِجٌ إِلَى

[9] Al-Bukhārī (680) and Muslim (419).

الصَّلَاةِ؛ فَأَشَارَ إِلَيْنَا النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَنْ أَتِمُّوا صَلَاتَكُمْ وَأَرْخَى السِّتْرَ، فَتُوُفِّيَ مِنْ يَوْمِهِ.

"Abū Bakr used to lead the people in prayer during the fatal illness of the Prophet (ﷺ) till it was Monday. When the people aligned (in rows) for the prayer, the Prophet (ﷺ) lifted the curtain of his house and started looking at us and was standing at that time. His face was (glittering) like a page of the Qur᾿ān, and he smiled cheerfully. We were about to be put to trial for the pleasure of seeing the Prophet. Abū Bakr retreated to join the row as he thought that the Prophet (ﷺ) would lead the prayer. The Prophet (ﷺ) beckoned us to complete the prayer, and he let the curtain fall. On the same day, he died."

Let us pause and ponder to seek the lesson from this ḥadīth. The Prophet (ﷺ) looked at his Companions in the Masjid, paying them his final respects. For the Prophet (ﷺ), the Ṣalāh was the joy of his heart, which is why it was pleasing to him to see his Companions congregating to pray in the Masjid. A smile appeared on his face reflecting the happiness he felt by seeing his Companions pray. Afterward, he let the curtain fall after witnessing such pleasing scenery. There are even more Ṣalāh-related incidents that took place at the Prophet's last moments. Imām Ahmad related on the authority of `Alī (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who reported that,

الصَّلَاةَ الصَّلَاةَ، اتَّقُوا اللهَ فِيمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ

“The last thing the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said: [Adhere to] Ṣalāh, [adhere to] Ṣalāh. Be mindful of Allāh when maintaining those under your responsibility.”[10]

Another ḥadīth is related by ibn Mājah[11] on the authority of Anas (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who reported,

كَانَتْ عَامَّةُ وَصِيَّةِ رَسُولِ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ حِينَ حَضَرَتْهُ الْوَفَاةُ وَهُوَ يُغَرْغِرُ بِنَفْسِهِ: الصَّلَاةَ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ حَتَّى جَعَلَ نَبِيُّ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يُلَجْلِجُهَا فِي صَدْرِهِ، وَمَا يَفِيضُ بِهَا لِسَانُهُ.

“What the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) most enjoined when he was dying and breathing his last was: [Adhere to] Ṣalāh; and treat justly those who are under your responsibility.’ The Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) kept

[10] Al-Musnad (585), Abū Dāwūd (5156), ibn Maja (2698), and it is graded as sound by al-Albānī in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi‘’ (4616).

[11] Sunnan ibn Maja (2697) and it is graded as sound by al-Albānī in al-‘Irwā’ (2178).

faltering when repeating it until he could no longer speak."[12]

Indeed, this manifests the prestigious status of Ṣalāh in Islām, and the undivided attention our Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) paid it. Anyone who reads the Ḥadīths and commandments he instructed during his life would instantly realize the value and status of Ṣalāh in Islām. It enjoys a unique position of all the other obligations as Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, had His Prophet ascend beyond the seventh heaven, at which He obligated Ṣalāh. The Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) heard the command directly without an intermediary. Initially, a count of fifty Ṣalāh was obligated. Still, he asked Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, to reduce the number until the eventual number became five daily Ṣalāh. However, they mount to fifty in reward. As for the remaining obligations and acts of worship, Gabriel used to descend to earth and deliver him the revelation. This truly reflects the prestigious status of Ṣalāh.

Unfortunately, some people turned the event of the Night Journey (*'Isrā' wa al-Mi'rāj*) into a celebration where they recite poems and sing while disregarding Ṣalāh. Who told them to do so? Who invited them? How could they be so negligent of the great lessons packed in the Night Journey and the Ṣalāh they are commanded to observe?! It is strange how some people would dare to miss Ṣalāh but would not miss such a celebration or any innovative [religious] celebrations. How does this match with a loyal adherence to the example of the Messenger of Allāh

[12] It is related by Ahmad (26483, 26684), al-Nasā'ī in 'al-Kubrā' (7060), and it is graded as sound by al-Albānī in al-'Irwā' (7/238).

(صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) who smiled at the sight of the Companions' congregational Ṣalāh?

A sincere follower of the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) would translate his love in steadfast adherence and complete compliance with the Sunnah. An expression for the love of the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) cannot be manifested in holding celebrations. They claim such a celebration reflects their love for the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ). By Allāh, had this been genuine love and sincere adherence, the Companions and those who follow them with good would have hastened to hold it first. However, they had not held any of those celebrations. Their refraining was guided by the example of the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and compliance with his guidance.

وَصِيَّةُ نَبِيِّكُمْ – عَلَيْهِ الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ-، وَهِيَ مِنْ آخِرِ مَا سُمِعَ مِنْهُ- عَلَيْهِ الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ-،فَيَا أَيُّهَا الْـمُحِبُّونَ لِلنَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: الصَّلَاةُ الصَّلَاةُ؛ فَهِيَ وَصِيَّتُهُ لَكُمْ وَعَهْدُهُ إِلَيْكُمْ، جَاءَ فِي الْمُسْنَدِ لِلْإِمَامِ أَحْمَد بِإِسْنَادٍ جَيِّدٍ أَنَّ الصَّلَاةَ ذُكِرَتْ عِنْدَ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَوْمًا فَقَالَ-عَلَيْهِ الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ-: ((مَنْ حَافَظْ عَلَيْهَا كَانَتْ لَهُ نُورًا وَبُرْهَانًا وَنَجَاةً يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، وَمَنْ لَمْ يُحَافِظْ عَلَيْهَا لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ نُورٌ وَلَا بُرْهَانٌ وَلَا نَجَاةٌ، وَكَانَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ مَعَ قَارُونَ وَفِرْعَوْنَ وَهَامَانَ وَأُبَيِّ بْن خَلَفٍ.

The commandment of your Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) was, "[Adhere to] Ṣalāh, [adhere to] Ṣalāh;" it was his last words. I call upon you who love the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) to adhere to Ṣalāh. Imām Ahmad related in his '*al-Musnad*'[13] a ḥadīth, with a good Isnād (chain of transmission), wherein Ṣalāh was mentioned before the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ). He said, "Whoever observes it regularly, it will be for him a light, an argument in his favor, and salvation on the Day of Judgment. Yet whoever does not observe it regularly, he will have no light, no argument in his favor, and no salvation. He will be on the Day of Judgment with Qārūn (Korah), Pharaoh, Hāmān, and Ubayy ibn Khalaf."

In other words, a person who is negligent of the Ṣalāh will be joined on the Day of Judgment with the significant figures of disbelief and falsehood. And we seek refuge with Allāh from such a situation. It is related in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim[14] on the authority of Jābir ibn ʿAbd Allāh that the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said,

بَيْنَ الرَّجُلِ وَبَيْنَ الشِّرْكِ وَالْكُفْرِ تَرْكُ الصَّلَاةِ

"Between man and polytheism and unbelief is the abandonment of Ṣalāh."

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13 N. (6576) Shaykh ibn Bāz graded its chain of transmission as 'good'. Majmūʿ Fatāwā ibn Bāz: (10/278).

14 N. (82)

Imām Ahmad related in his '*al-Musnad*' that the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said,

الْعَهْدُ الَّذِي بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَهُمُ الصَّلَاةُ؛ فَمَنْ تَرَكَهَا فَقَدْ كَفَرَ

"The covenant between them and us is prayer, so whoever abandons it has disbelieved."[15]

In another ḥadīth related in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī[16], the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said,

مَنْ صَلَّى صَلَاتَنَا، وَاسْتَقْبَلَ قِبْلَتَنَا، وَأَكَلَ ذَبِيحَتَنَا، فَذَلِكَ الْمُسْلِمُ الَّذِي لَهُ ذِمَّةُ اللهِ وَذِمَّةُ رَسُولِهِ؛ فَلَا تُخْفِرُوا اللهَ فِي ذِمَّتِهِ.

"If anyone observes our form of Ṣalāh, faces our Qiblah, and eats what we slaughter, that one is a Muslim who has protection from Allāh and His messenger. So do not betray Allāh's protection."

There are many Ḥadīths in this regard.

So, be mindful of Allāh, O followers of the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ), and keep in mind this great commandment uttered by the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) at his last breaths. Also,

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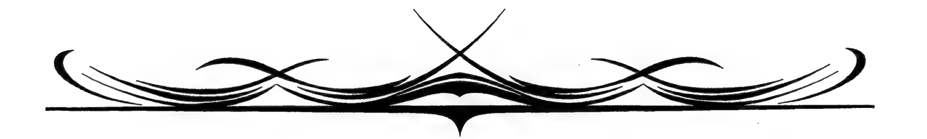
[15] N. (22937), al-Tirmidhī (2621), ibn Maja (1079) on the authority of Buraydah (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ), and it was graded as sound by Al-Albānī in 'Ṣaḥīḥ al-Targhīb': (564).

[16] N. (391) on the authority of Anas (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ).

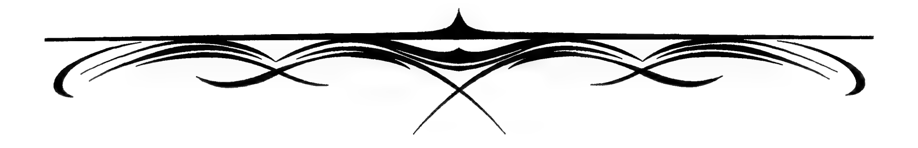
read carefully the biographies of the faithful followers, namely the first generation of Muslims, for it is indeed pure. Imām Muslim related in his Ṣaḥīḥ on the authority of ʿAbd Allāh ibn Masʿūd (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who said, "He who likes to meet Allāh tomorrow (i.e., on the Day of Judgment) as a Muslim, should take care and observe the Ṣalāh when the Adhan is announced for them. Allāh has expounded to your Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) the ways of right guidance, and this (the Ṣalāh) is part of the right guidance. If you have to perform Ṣalāh in your houses, as this man who stays away (from the Masjid) and performs Ṣalāh at his house, you will abandon the Sunnah (practice) of your Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ), and the departure from the Sunnah of your Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) will lead you astray. I had seen the time when no one stayed behind except a well-known hypocrite. I also saw that a man was brought swaying (on account of weakness) between two men till he was set up in a row (in the Masjid)."

Ponder on this illuminating portrayal of the Companions! They perfectly internalized the Sunnah of the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and accurately understood his commandment. They genuinely followed his example and truly complied with his [commands] to the extent that one of them would be brought swaying out of weakness yet aided by two men, one on his right and the other on his left to help him stand in the row in Ṣalāh. Unfortunately, many people undervalue Ṣalāh to the extent they would be distracted from observing it [in the Masjid] by trivial things. One must instead be mindful of Allāh and observe Ṣalāh consistently and adequately. It is the first thing on account of which one will be held accountable on the Day of Judgment; if accepted, the remaining deeds will be accepted, but if rejected, the remaining

deeds will be rejected. May Allāh, Glorified, and Exalted, include us among those who establish Ṣalāh and follow the Prophet (صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَعَلَىٰآلِهِوَسَلَّمَ). O Allāh! Make us among his company and under his banner.



STATUS OF THE ṢALĀH



One of the most critical obligations Allāh ordained on His servants is Ṣalāh. It is the founding pillar of religion and the most critical, second in rank to the two testimonies of faith. It forges a connection between the servant and his Lord. Consistent observance of Ṣalāh is a reflection of faith while abandoning it is indicative of disbelief and transgression, because,

لَا دِينَ لِـمَنْ لَا صَلَاةَ لَهُ

'a person who does not observe Ṣalāh is deprived of religion."[17]

[17] It is related by ibn Abū Shaybah in 'al-'Īman' (47), al-Mirwazī in 'Taʿdhīm Qadr al-Ṣalāh' (937), al-Khalāl in 'al-Sunna' (1387), and others. It is narrated as Mawqūf on ʿAbd Allāh ibn Masʿūd (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) with the wording, "whoever does not pray has no religion.". Its chain of transmission is graded as good by al-Albānī in 'al-Daʿīfah' (1/382).

Another narration states,

وَلَا حَظَّ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ لِمَنْ تَرَكَ الصَّلَاةَ

"“There is no share in Islām for whoever abandons prayer.”[18]

Whoever observes it consistently will enjoy its light in his heart, face, grave, during the Great Gathering (*Ḥashr*), and salvation on the Day of Judgment. He will be joined in the Great Gathering with those whom Allāh blessed from the prophets, the truthful, the martyrs, and pious, and how excellent are those as companions. In contrast, negligence in observing Ṣalāh will have no light, argument on his favor, nor salvation on the Day of Judgment beside joining the company of Pharaoh, Qārūn (Korah), Hāmān, and Ubayy ibn Khalaf.

In his book '*al-Ṣalāh,*' Imām Ahmad said:

جَاءَ فِي الْحَدِيثِ: لَا حَظَّ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ لِمَنْ تَرَكَ الصَّلَاةَ، وَقَدْ كَانَ عُمَرُ بْنُ الْخَطَّابِ يَكْتُبُ إِلَى الْآفَاقِ: ((إِنَّ أَهَمَّ أُمُورِكُمْ عِنْدِي الصَّلَاةُ، فَمَنْ حَفِظَهَا حَفِظَ دِينَهُ، وَمَنْ ضَيَّعَهَا فَهُوَ لِمَا سِوَاهَا أَضْيَعُ، وَلَا حَظَّ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ لِمَنْ تَرَكَ الصَّلَاةَ))، قَالَ: فَكُلُّ مُسْتَخِفٍّ

[18] Related by Mālik in 'al-Muwaṭa' (51), al-Mirwazī in 'Taʿdhīm Qadr al-Ṣalāh' (923), and others on the authority of al-Miswār ibn Makhramah from `Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) narrating the story of his stabbing. It is graded as sound by al-Albānī in 'al-Irwā' (209).

بِالصَّلَاةِ مُسْتَهِينٍ بِهَا، فَهُوَ مُسْتَخِفٌّ بِالْإِسْلَامِ مُسْتَهِينٌ بِهِ، وَإِنَّمَا حَظُّهُمْ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ عَلَى قَدرِ حَظِّهِمْ مِنَ الصَّلَاةِ، وَرَغْبَتُهُمْ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ عَلَى رَغْبَتِهِمْ فِي الصَّلَاةِ، فَاعْرِفْ نَفْسَكَ يَا عَبْدَ اللهِ؛ وَاحْذَرْ أَنْ تَلْقَى اللهَ وَلَا قَدْرَ لِلْإِسْلَامِ عِنْدَكَ، فَإِنَّ قَدرَ الْإِسْلَامِ قَلْبِكَ كَقَدرِ الصَّلَاةِ فِي قَلْبِكَ، وَقَدْ جَاءَ فِي الْـحَدِيثِ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَنَّـهُ قَالَ: ((الصَّلَاةُ عَمُودُ الدِّينِ))، أَلَسْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّ الْفُسْطَاطَ-أي الْـخيمَة-إِذَا سَقَطَ عَمُودُهُ سَقَطَ، وَلَمْ يُنْتَفَعْ بِالطُّنُبِ وَلَا الْأَوْتَادِ، وَإِذَا قَامَ عَمُودُ الْفُسْطَاطِ انْتُفِعَ بِالطُّنُبِ وَالْأَوْتَادِ؟ وَكَذَلِكَ الصَّلَاةُ مِنَ الْإِسْلَامِ، فَانْظُرُوا -رَحِمَكُمُ اللهُ- وَاعْقِلُوا، وَأَحْكِمُوا الصَّلَاةَ، وَاتَّقُوا اللهَ فِيهَا، وَتَـعَاوَنُوا عَلَيْهَا، وَتَنَاصَحُوا فِيهَا بِالتَّعْلِيمِ مِنْ بَعْضِكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ، وَالتَّذْكِيرِ مِنْ بَعْضِكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ مِنَ الْغَفْلَةِ وَالنِّسْيَانِ، فَإِنَّ اللهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ قَدْ أَمَرَكُمْ أَنْ تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِـرِّ وَالتَّقْوَى، وَالصَّلَاةُ أَفْضَلُ الْـبِـرِّ؛ وَجَاءَ الْـحَدِيثُ أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: ((أَوَّلُ مَا تَفْقِدُونَ مِنْ دِينِكُمُ الْأَمَانَةُ، وَآخِرُ مَا تَفْقِدُونَ مِنْـهُ الصَّلَاةُ، وَلَيُصَلِّيَـنَّ أَقْوَامٌ لَا خَلَاقَ لَـهُمْ))، فَصَلَاتُنَا آخِرُ دِينِـنَا، وَهِيَ أَوَّلُ مَا نُسْأَلُ عَنْهُ غَدًا مِنْ أَعْمَالِنَا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، فَلَيْسَ

بَعْدَ ذَهَابِ الصَّلَاةِ إِسْلَامٌ وَلَا دِينٌ إِذَا صَارَتِ الصَّلَاةُ آخِرَ مَا يَذْهَبُ مِنَ الْإِسْلَامِ، فَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ يَذْهَبُ آخِرُهُ، فَقَدْ ذَهَبَ جَمِيعُـهُ.

"On account of the ḥadīth that reads, 'there is no share in Islām for whoever abandons the Ṣalāh," `Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb used to send letters to the distant regions [within the territory of Islām]. They contain, "The most important affair of yours is the Ṣalāh, for whoever commits to it will preserve his religion whereas neglecting it entails negligence of other less important affairs; there is no share in Islām for whoever abandons the Ṣalāh." In other words, anyone who belittles the Ṣalāh does necessarily belittle Islām because one's share and desire of the [religion] of Islām is judged by the extent of desire and commitment to the Ṣalāh. So, know who you are and beware of meeting Allāh while lacking respect of Islām, because the value of Islām in the heart is determined by the value of the Ṣalāh in your heart. It is reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, 'the Ṣalāh is the pillar of religion.'[19] Do you not know that if the pillar of a tent falls, the stakes will not help? However, if the pillar is standing, the stakes would

[19] Related by Ahmad (22016), al-Tirmidhī (2616), and ibn Maja (3973) on the authority of Muʿādh ibn Jabal (رضي الله عنه) who reported, "Shall I tell you of the essence of the matter, its pillar and its peak? I replied: Yes certainly, O Messenger of Allāh. He said: The essence of this matter is Islām, its pillar is the prayer, and its peak is Jihad." It is graded by al-Tirmidhī and al-Albānī in 'al-'Irwā' (413).

definitely lend support. This shows the value of the Ṣalāh in Islām. So, may Allāh have mercy upon you, think carefully, be mindful of Allāh, cooperate in establishing the Ṣalāh, and advise one another through teaching it. Remind one another of the Ṣalāh lest one forgets or falls in negligence. Allāh, Glorified, and Exalted, has commanded you to cooperate on good and righteousness, whose greatest manifestation is Ṣalāh. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "The first thing you lose from your religion is honesty, and the last is Ṣalāh. Indeed, there will be people who pray yet availing nothing of their Ṣalāh."[20] Our Ṣalāh is the last thing we will lose from our religion and the first item of deeds on account of which one will be judged. Abandonment of the Ṣalāh entails the abandonment of Islām and religion in general. After we lose the Ṣalāh, everything else in Islām would be gone."[21]

Muslims unanimously agree that abandoning the obligatory Ṣalāh intentionally is one of the gravest sins, far worse than killing a soul, unlawful seizure of wealth, adultery, theft, and consumption of intoxicants. The person who abandons Ṣalāh exposes himself to the punishment, wrath, and reproach of Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, in this worldly life and the hereafter. On a related note,

[20] Related by Abū Ya'lā in his 'Musnad' (6634) on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه).

[21] Abū Ya'lā quoted this book in his work 'Tabaqāt al-Hanābilah'. You can find the above quotation in (1/353-354).

the scholars disagreed on the legal ruling of killing the person abandoning the Ṣalāh, the manner of killing, and whether or not he is a disbeliever. Their statements and elaborate discussions on this issue are presented in the well-known scholarly works. Thereby it is needles to discuss this issue here.

However, the scholars who held that the person who abandons the Ṣalāh have relied on very compelling evidence from the Qur'ān and Sunnah. The least effective prompt inspired by that evidence is that they incite substantial fear in the hearts of Muslims from abandoning the Ṣalāh. They also encourage consistent and adequate observance of the Ṣalāh at their stated times. Consider the following examples:

Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, said,

﴿ كُلُّ نَفْسِۭ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ رَهِينَةٌ ۝٣٨ إِلَّآ أَصْحَٰبَ ٱلْيَمِينِ ۝٣٩ فِى
جَنَّٰتٍ يَتَسَآءَلُونَ ۝٤٠ عَنِ ٱلْمُجْرِمِينَ ۝٤١ مَا سَلَكَكُمْ فِى سَقَرَ ۝٤٢
قَالُوا۟ لَمْ نَكُ مِنَ ٱلْمُصَلِّينَ ۝٤٣ وَلَمْ نَكُ نُطْعِمُ ٱلْمِسْكِينَ ۝٤٤ وَكُنَّا
نَخُوضُ مَعَ ٱلْخَآئِضِينَ ۝٤٥ وَكُنَّا نُكَذِّبُ بِيَوْمِ ٱلدِّينِ ۝٤٦ ﴾

"Every soul is held in pledge for its deeds, but the Companions of the Right will stay in gardens, questioning each other about the guilty. 'What drove you to the Scorching Fire?' [they will ask]. And they will answer, 'We did not pray; we did not feed the poor; we indulged with others [in mocking the believers]; we

denied the Day of Judgement until the Certain End came upon us." [Sūrah Al-Muddathir (74):38-47]

Allāh The Almighty said,



"But there came after them successors who neglected prayer and pursued desires, so they are going to meet evil." [Sūrah Maryam (19):59]

It is reported that ibn Mas'ūd (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) said that the word 'evil' here refers to "a river in the hellfire, horrible in taste and very distant in depth."[22]

How serious is the trouble of who experiences it? And how sorrowful is he who enters it?

Allāh The Almighty said,

﴿ فَإِن تَابُوا۟ وَأَقَامُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتَوُا۟ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ فَإِخْوَٰنُكُمْ فِى ٱلدِّينِ ۗ ﴾

[22] Related by al-Ṭabarī in his Tafsīr (18/218).

"But if they repent, establish prayer, and give Zakāh, then they are your brothers in religion." [Sūrah Al-Tawbah (9):11]

In this verse, fraternity in religion is hinged on the observance of Ṣalāh, which indicates the nonexistence of this fraternity were they to abandon Ṣalāh.

Allāh The Almighty said,

﴿ إِنَّمَا يُؤْمِنُ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا ٱلَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِّرُواْ بِهَا خَرُّواْ سُجَّدًا وَسَبَّحُواْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ وَهُمْ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ۩ ﴿١٥﴾ ﴾

"Only those believe in Our verses who, when they are reminded by them, fall down in prostration and exalt [Allāh] with praise of their Lord, and they are not arrogant." [Sūrah Al-Sajdah (32):15]

Allāh The Almighty said,

﴿ وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ ٱرْكَعُواْ لَا يَرْكَعُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾ وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٤٩﴾ ﴾

"When they are told, 'Bow down in prayer,' they do not do so. Woe, on that day, to those who denied the truth!" [Sūrah Al-Mursalāt (77):48-49]

These two verses are mentioned after the verse that reads,

﴿ كُلُوا۟ وَتَمَتَّعُوا۟ قَلِيلًا إِنَّكُم مُّجْرِمُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾ ﴾

"[You may] eat and enjoy yourselves for a short while, evildoers that you are." [Sūrah Al-Mursalāt (77):46]

This shows that the one who abandons the Ṣalāh is an evildoer who deserves to be punished when meeting Allāh, Glorified, and Exalted.

Muslim related in his Ṣaḥīḥ on the authority of Jābir (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who reported that the Messenger (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said,

بَيْنَ الرَّجُلِ وَبَيْنَ الشِّرْكِ وَالْكُفْرِ تَرْكُ الصَّلَاةِ

"Between the man and disbelief and polytheism is the abandonment of Ṣalāh."[23]

Imām Ahmad and the authors of the Sunnan works related with a sound chain of narration on the authority of `Abd Allāh ibn Buraydah who reported from his father: I heard the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said,

الْعَهْدُ الَّذِي بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَهُمُ الصَّلَاةُ؛ فَمَنْ تَرَكَهَا فَقَدْ كَفَرَ

[23] N. (82)

> **“The covenant between them and us is prayer, so whoever abandons it has disbelieved.”[24]**

Imām Ahmad, ibn Ḥibbān, and al-Ṭabarānī related on the authority of ʿAbd Allāh ibn al-ʿĀṣ, who reported that the Ṣalāh was mentioned before the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ). He said,

مَنْ حَافَظَ عَلَيْهَا كَانَتْ لَهُ نُورًا وَبُرْهَانًا وَنَجَاةً يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، وَمَنْ لَمْ يُحَافِظْ عَلَيْهَا لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ نُورٌ وَلَا بُرْهَانٌ وَنَجَاةٌ، وَكَانَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ مَعَ قَارُونَ وَفِرْعَوْنَ وَهَامَانَ وَأُبَيِّ بْنِ خَلَفٍ.

> **“Whoever observes it regularly, it will be for him a light, an argument in his favor, and salvation on the Day of Judgment; and whoever does not observe it regularly, he will have no light, no argument in his favor, and no salvation, and he will be on the Day of Judgment with Qārūn (Korah), Pharaoh, Hāmān, and Ubayy ibn Khalaf.”**

There is an intriguing note to be deduced: the one who abandons the Ṣalāh is typically distracted by his wealth, kingdom, chiefdom, or trade. The one distracted by wealth would be similar to Qārūn, the one distracted by kingdom would be similar to Pharaoh, the one distracted by chiefdom would be similar to

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[24] Related by Ahmad. (22937), al-Tirmidhī (2621), ibn Mājah (1079) on the authority of Buraydah (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ), and it was graded as sound by Al-Albānī in ‘Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmiʿ: (4143).

Hāmān. The one distracted by trade and wealth would be similar to Ubayy ibn Khalaf.

Imām Ahmad related on the authority of Mu`ādh ibn Jabal (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ), who reported that the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said,

مَنْ تَرَكَ صَلَاةً مَكْتُوبَةً مُـتَعَمِّدًا؛ فَقَدْ بَرِئَتْ مِنْهُ ذِمَّةُ اللهِ

"Whoever neglects a prescribed Ṣalāh deliberately will no longer enjoy the protection of Allāh."[25]

This is a sound (Ṣaḥīḥ) ḥadīth.

In another ḥadīth related in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said,

مَنْ صَلَّى صَلَاتَنَا، وَاسْتَقْبَلَ قِبْلَتَنَا، وَأَكَلَ ذَبِيحَتَنَا؛ فَذَلِكَ الْـمُسْلِمُ الَّذِي لَهُ ذِمَّةُ اللهِ وَذِمَّةُ رَسُولِهِ، فَلَا تُـخْفِرُوا اللهَ فِي ذِمَّـتِهِ.

"If anyone observes our form of Ṣalāh, faces our qibla, and eats what we slaughter, that one is a Muslim who has protection from Allāh and His messenger; so, do not betray Allāh's protection."

In a sound chain of transmission, Miḥjan al-ʾAslamī (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) reported that he was in a gathering with the Messenger of Allāh

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[25] N. (22075). Al-Albānī graded in Saḥīḥ al-Targhīb as a good for extraneous reasons (Ḥasan li Ghayrihi)

(صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) when the Adhan was called for prayer. The Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) got up, then he came back, and Miḥjan was still sitting there. The Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said to him:

مَا مَنَعَكَ أَنْ يُصَلِّيَ؟ أَلَسْتَ بِـرَجُلٍ مُسْلِمٍ؟ قَالَ: بَلَى، وَلَكِنِّي كُنْتُ قَدْ صَلَّيْتُ فِي أَهْلِي، فَقَالَ لَـهُ رَسُولُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: ((إِذَا جِئْتَ؛ فَصَلِّ مَعَ النَّاسِ وَإِنْ كُنْتَ قَدْ صَلَّيْتَ)).

"What kept you from praying? Are you not a Muslim man?" He said: "Yes, but I had already prayed with my family." The Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said to him: "When you come, you should pray with the people even if you have already prayed."[26]

Many other reports are narrating the Companions' statements in this regard. For example,

`Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رَضِيَ ٱللَّٰهُ عَنْهُ) said,

لَا حَظَّ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ لِـمَنْ تَرَكَ الصَّلَاةَ

"There is no share in Islām for whoever abandons Ṣalāh."

26 Ahmad in al-Musnad (16395), al-Nasā'ī in his 'Sunnan' (857) and Mālik in his 'al-Muwaṭa'' (8). It is graded as sound by Al-Albānī in 'al-Ṣaḥīḥah' (1337).

He also said,

لَا إِسْلَامَ لِـمَنْ تَرَكَ الصَّلَاةَ

"There is no Islām for whoever abandons Ṣalāh." He made this statement in the presence of the Companions (may Allāh be pleased with them), and none objected. Besides, some of the Companions (may Allāh be pleased with them) have made similar statements such as Mu`ādh ibn Jabal, `Abd al-Raḥmān ibn `Awf, Abū Hurayrah, `Abd Allāh ibn Mas`ūd, among others.

Muslim narrated in his Ṣaḥīḥ on the authority of `Abd Allāh ibn Mas`ūd (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who said,

مَنْ سَرَّهُ أَنْ يَلْقَى اللهَ غَدًا مُسْلِمًا؛ فَلْيُحَافِظ عَلَى هَؤُلَاءِ الصَّلَوَاتِ حَيْثُ يُنَادَى بِـهِنَّ-أَي فِي الْـمَسَاجِدِ-؛ فَإِنَّ اللهَ شَرَعَ لِـنَبِيِّكُمْ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ سُنَنَ الْـهُدَى، وَإِنَّـهُنَّ مِنْ سُنَنِ الْـهُدَى، وَلَوْ أَنَّكُمْ صَلَّيْتُمْ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ كَمَا يُصَلِّي هَذَا الْـمُتَخَلِّفُ فِي بَيْتِـهِ لَـتَـرَكْتُمْ سُنَّةَ نَبِيِّـكُمْ، وَلَوْ تَرَكْتُمْ سُنَّةَ نَبِيِّكُمْ لَضَلَلْتُمْ، وَمَا مِنْ رَجُلٍ يَتَطَهَّرُ فَيُحْسِنُ الطُّهُورَ، ثُمَّ يَعْمِدُ إِلَى مَسْجِدٍ مِنْ هَذِهِ الْـمَسَاجِدِ إِلَّا كَتَبَ اللهُ لَـهُ بِكُلِّ خَطْوَةٍ يَـخْطُوهَا حَسَنَةً، وَيَـرْفَعُهُ بِـهَا دَرَجَةً، وَيَـحُطُّ عَنْهُ بِـهَا سَيِّئَةً، وَلَقَدْ رَأَيْتُنَا- يَعْنِي أَصْحَابَ رَسُولِ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ- وَمَا يَتَخَلَّفُ عَنْهَا إِلَّا مُنَافِقٌ مَعْلُومُ

النِّفاقِ، وَلَقَدْ كَانَ الرَّجُولُ يُؤْتَى بِهِ يُهادَى بَيْنَ الرَّجُلَيْنِ حَتَّى يُقامَ فِي الصَّفِّ.

"He who likes to meet Allāh tomorrow (i.e., on the Day of Judgment) as a Muslim, should take care and observe the Ṣalāh when the Adhan is announced for them. Allāh has expounded to your Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) the ways of right guidance, and this (the Ṣalāh) is part of the right guidance. If you have to perform Ṣalāh in your houses, as this man who stays away (from the Masjid) and performs Ṣalāh at his house, you will abandon the Sunnah (practice) of your Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ), and the departure from the Sunnah of your Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) will lead you astray. I had seen the time when no one stayed behind except a well-known hypocrite. I also saw that a man was brought swaying (on account of weakness) between two men till he was set up in a row (in the Masjid)."

Given that such reproach concerns the one who misses the congregational Ṣalāh, considered by the Companions (may Allāh be pleased with them) to be a well-known hypocrite, then how about the one who abandons it altogether?! We ask Allāh to grant us safety from such a resort! Indeed, the Ṣalāh enjoys a sublime status in Islām. Despite this status, many people undervalue the Ṣalāh such that some people are never seen in the Masjid, though probably living nearby. They would not mind attending to their worldly needs but would not do so for Ṣalāh though they are likely to hear the five Adhans. It is as if they say: we hear, but we

disobey. It is also confusing to find that some of those individuals may live with people who attend the Ṣalāh in the Masjid, but the latter refrains from advising the former. They do not mind eating, drinking, or conversing with such an individual; so, where is burning desire for the religion of Allāh? Where is enjoining the good and forbidding the evil?

Furthermore, some people observe the conditions, requirements, and obligations of Ṣalāh inadequately. Others slack off attending the congregational Ṣalāh, which is a sign of hypocrisy. We must therefore observe the Ṣalāh consistently because it is the most significant pillar of Islām, next in line to the testimonies of faith. We must beware of treading the path of the evildoers who would refrain from praying if they were told to pray. On a similar note, the individual should abstain from self-conceit and admiration of his own deeds, thus driving him away from glorifying his Lord and His rites, which would make him a failure.

Khālid ibn ʿUmayr al-ʿAdawī reported,

خَطَبَنَا عُتْبَة بْنُ غَزْوَان، فَحَمِدَ اللهَ وَأَثْنَى عَلَيْهِ، ثُمَّ قَالَ: أَمَّا بَعْدُ؛ فَإِنَّ الدُّنْيَا قَدْ آذَنَتْ بِصُرْمٍ، وَوَلَّتْ حَذَّاءَ، وَلَمْ يَبْقَ مِنْهَا إِلَّا صُبَابَةٌ كَصُبَابَةِ الْإِنَاءِ، يَتَصَابُّهَا صَاحِبُهَا، وَإِنَّكُمْ مُنْتَقِلُونَ مِنْهَا إِلَى دَارٍ لَا زَوَالَ لَهَا، فَانْتَقِلُوا بِخَيْرِ مَا بِحَضْرَتِكُمْ، فَإِنَّهُ قَدْ ذُكِرَ لَنَا أَنَّ الْحَجَرَ يُلْقَى مِنْ شَفَةِ جَهَنَّمَ، فَيَهْوِي فِيهَا سَبْعِينَ عَامًا لَا يُدْرِكُ لَهَا قَعْرًا، وَوَاللهِ! لَتُمْلَأَنَّ؛ أَفَعَجِبْتُمْ؟ وَلَقَدْ ذُكِرَ لَنَا أَنَّ مَا بَيْنَ مِصْرَاعَيْنِ

مِنْ مَصَارِيعِ الْـجَنَّةِ مَسِيرَةُ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً، وَلَيَأْتِيَنَّ عَلَيْهَا يَوْمٌ وَهُوَ كَظِيظق مِنَ الزِّحَامِ، وَلَقَدْ رَأَيْتُنِي سَابِعَ سَبْعَةٍ مَعَ رَسُولِ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَا لَنَا طَعامٌ إِلَّا وَرَقُ الشَّجَرِ، حَتَّى قَرِحَتْ أَشْدَاقُنَا، فَالْتَقَطْتُ بُرْدَةً فَشَقَقْتُهَا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَ سَعْدِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ، فَاتَّزَرْتُ بِنِصْفِهَا، وَاتَّزَرَ سَعْدٌ بِنِصْفِهَا؛ فَمَا أَصْبَحَ الْيَوْمَ مِنَّا أَحَدٌ إِلَّا أَصْبَحَ أَمِيرًا عَلَى مِصْرٍ مِنَ الْأَمْصَارِ، وَإِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِاللهِ أَنْ أَكُونَ فِي نَفْسِي عَظِيمًا وَعِنْدَ اللهِ صَغِيرًا، وَإِنَّهَا لَمْ تَكُنْ نُبُوَّةٌ قَطُّ إِلَّا تَنَاسَخَتْ، حَتَّى يَكُونَ آخِرُ عَاقِبَتِهَا مُلْكًا، فَسَتَخْبُرُونَ وَتُـجَرِّبُونَ الْأُمَرَاءَ بَعْدَنَا.

"`Utba ibn Ghazwān delivered us a sermon. He praised Allāh, glorified Him, then said: "Verily, the world has been given the news of its end and is running to meet its end swiftly. Nothing is left out of it but a tiny amount. Similar to the remainder in a dish whose owner is collecting it to drink; and you are going to move to an abode which knows no end, and you should proceed there with the good before you, for we have been informed (by the Prophet (صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَعَلَىٰآلِهِوَسَلَّمَ) that a stone would be thrown at one side of the Hell. It would travel down for seventy years but would not reach its bottom. By Allāh, it will be filled (with men and jinn). Do you find it strange? We have been informed (i.e., by the Prophet (صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَعَلَىٰآلِهِوَسَلَّمَ) that the distance between two shutters of the gate of Jannah is forty years (distance).

And a day would come when it would be fully packed; I was the seventh amongst the seven who had been with Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ). We had nothing to eat but the leaves of the tree until the sides of our mouth were injured. We found a sheet which we tore into two and divided between myself and Sa`d ibn Mālik. I made the lower garment with half of it, and so did Sa`d. Today, none amongst us has become the governor of a city. I seek refuge with Allāh that I should consider myself great while I am insignificant to Allāh. Prophethood does not remain forever, and its impact fades with the result that it eventually changes into kingship. You would soon come to know and experience those rulers who would come after us and see (how far they are from religion)."Related by Muslim.[27]

We ask Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, to give us refuge from the path of the evildoers, to guide us to observe His worship consistently and to aid us in committing to Ṣalāh. O Allāh, include us among those who establish Ṣalāh.

[27] N. (2967).



TWO CRITICAL STANCES



Two major stances the servant is expected to pose for them before his Lord. One occurs in this worldly life and the other when meeting Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, on the Day of Judgment. The success of the first stance breeds success and happiness in the second stance. Similarly, failure in the first stance brings about failure and loss in the second stance.

First stance: it is manifested in the Ṣalāh Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, obligated upon His servants five times a day and night. Anyone who observes it consistently pays it due attention and perfects its conditions, obligations, and requirements will ease the stance on the Day of Judgment and score success. On the other hand, undermining this stance by disregarding Ṣalāh and paying it less than its due attention, and performing it inadequately will double the difficulty on the other stance on the Day of Judgment.

Ḥurayth ibn Qabīsah reported,

أَتَيْتُ الْمَدِينَةَ فَسَأَلْتُ اللَّهَ -جَلَّ وَعَلَا- أَنْ يَرْزُقَنِي جَلِيسًا صَالِحًا، فَجَلَسْتُ إِلَى أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ، وَقُلْتُ لَهُ: يَا أَبَا هُرَيْرَةَ! إِنِّي سَأَلْتُ اللَّهَ أَنْ يَرْزُقَنِي جَلِيسًا صَالِحًا؛ فَعَلِّمْنِي حَدِيثًا سَمِعْتَهُ مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لَعَلَّ اللَّهَ أَنْ يَنْفَعَنِي بِهِ! فَقَالَ أَبُو هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ: سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ: ((إِنَّ أَوَّلَ مَا يُحَاسَبُ بِهِ الْعَبْدُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ مِنْ عَمَلِهِ صَلَاتُهُ؛ فَإِنْ صَلَحَتْ فَقَدْ أَفْلَحَ وَأَنْجَحَ، وَإِنْ فَسَدَتْ فَقَدْ خَابَ وَخَسِرَ)).

"I arrived in Medina and asked Allāh to bless me with the company of a righteous individual. I sat with Abū Hurayrah and said: 'Indeed, I asked Allāh to provide me with a righteous gathering. So, narrate a hadith to me which you heard from Allāh's Messenger (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) so that perhaps Allāh would cause me to benefit from it.' He said: 'I heard Allāh's Messenger (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) say,

"Indeed, the first deed a servant will be called to account on the Day of Resurrection is his Ṣalāh. If it is complete, he is successful and saved, but if it is defective, he has failed and lost."[28]

[28] Related by al-Tirmidhī (413), al-al-Nasā'ī (465) and it is graded as sound by al-Albānī in 'Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi'' (2020).

It is a sound ḥadīth. Look carefully at how the success in the first stance caused the success of the second one and vice-versa. Indeed, the one who is negligent of Ṣalāh and performs it inadequately has doomed himself to utter loss when he stands before Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, on the second stance. At that point, he will be overwhelmed with useless regret.

مَنْ حَافَظَ عَلَيْهَا كَانَتْ لَهُ نُورًا، وَبُرْهَانًا، وَنَجَاةً يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، وَمَنْ لَمْ يُحَافِظْ عَلَيْهَا لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ نُورٌ، وَلَا بُرْهَانٌ، وَلَا نَجَاةٌ، وَكَانَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ مَعَ قَارُونَ، وَفِرْعَوْنَ، وَهَامَانَ، وَأُبَيِّ بْنِ خَلَفٍ.

> **"Whoever observes it regularly, it will be for him a light, an argument in his favor, and salvation on the Day of Judgment; and whoever does not observe it regularly, he will have no light, no argument in his favor, and no salvation, and he will be on the Day of Judgment with Qārūn (Korah), Pharaoh, Hāmān, and Ubayy ibn Khalaf."**

As mentioned earlier, the individual who abandons the Ṣalāh will join the company of the major figures of disbelief. Because he chose to be distracted by unnecessary entertainment, falsehood, disobedience, debauchery, and following callers of immorality. It is why he deserves to be joined with those of his ilk on the Day of Judgment. Allāh The Almighty said,

﴿ ۞ ٱحْشُرُوا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ وَأَزْوَٰجَهُمْ وَمَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾ ﴾

> **"[Angels], gather together those who did wrong, and others like them, as well as whatever they worshipped."** [Sūrah Al-Ṣāffāt (37):22].

People and their likes will be joined together in the Gathering on the Day of Judgment. If one observes Ṣalāh consistently at the Masjid, will enjoy the honor of joining, on the Day of Judgment, the obedient such as the prophets, the truthful, the martyrs, the pious, and how great is such company. In contrast, the one who refuses to join such company by embracing disobedience and deviance at the expense of attending Ṣalāh will be gathered along with the people of his ilk. The Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰٓ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said,

((كُلُّ أُمَّتِي يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ إِلَّا مَنْ أَبَى))، قَالُوا: يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ! وَمَنْ يَأْبَى؟ قَالَ: ((مَنْ أَطَاعَنِي دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ، وَمَنْ عَصَانِي فَقَدْ أَبَى))

> **"All of my nation will enter paradise except those who refuse.' It is said, 'who will refuse, o Messenger of Allāh? He replied, 'Whoever obeys me will enter paradise, but whoever disobeys me will refuse [to enter paradise]."**[29]

Let us contemplate the stance on the Day of Judgment because you will definitely stand there. It is literally a distressful and shocking moment; do you know who long it is? It will last a single day that equals fifty thousand years. Do you have anything to compare this unyielding day with? Let us just assume that you

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[29] Related by al-Bukhārī on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) (7280).

will live sixty, seventy, or eighty years; does this minimal number stand in comparison? Even more, assuming you would live sixty years, one-third of which is spent sleeping on an eight-hour sleeping average, thus adding up to twenty years. Add to this 15 years, more or less, spent underage at the beginning of his life where he is not a legally competent individual. So, what is now left of those sixty years?

So, be mindful of Allāh with regards to Ṣalāh as you stand before Allāh, Glorified and Exalted. Once achieved, your status before Allāh will be elevated. You must not waste such status; otherwise, nothing awaits you but utter loss. It is soundly related in '*al-Mustadrak*' by al-Ḥākim on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who reported that the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said,

يَوْمُ الْقِيَامَةِ عَلَى الْـمُؤْمِنِينَ كَقَدْرِ مَا بَيْنَ الظُّهْرِ وَالْعَصْرِ

"The [length] of the Day of Judgment for believers is about the same length between Ẓuhr and ʿAṣr."[30]

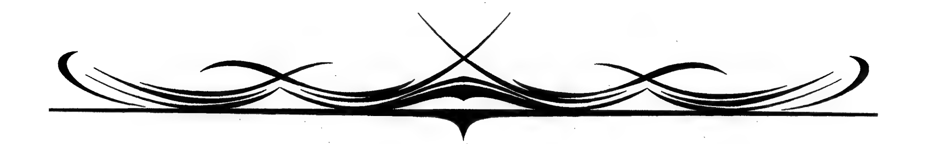
This ḥadīth highlights Ẓuhr and ʿAṣr to reflects their status and how observing them contribute significantly to that goal. We must, therefore, be mindful of Allāh in this critical obligation because it has been undervalued and the object of negligence by many people today. They inadequately observe its requirements and conditions, which brings us sorrow to witness such a painful reality. Abandonment of the Ṣalāh is indeed a severe deprivation in this worldly life and the hereafter. So, do not ever please

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[30] (1/158) and it is graded as sound by al-Albānī in 'Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmiʿ' (8193).

yourself with a life of humiliation that will bring you nothing but degradation and loss, which is the destiny of anyone who is wasteful of Ṣalāh.

What good or virtue would one gain if he abandons Ṣalāh considered to be the bridge between the servant and his Lord? Once, someone reprimanded a preacher and told him, "You have been delivering Khutbahs for us for many years now; what have you offered? He replied, "and you have listening throughout that period; what have you done?" When a Muslim hears the admonition or a Khutbah, one should internalize it and ask Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, to ease implementation for him, guide him to success, and never leave him on his own accord. People have heard plenty of admonitions, yet some are still heedless. People will eventually meet Allāh, Glorified, and Exalted, and they will be judged. Therefore, the individual must seize the opportunity of life to reform himself, purify his soul, and polish his deeds; for indeed, success lies with Allāh alone, without a partner. O Allāh, there is none worthy of worship but You; we ask You by Your beautiful Names and high attributes to include us and our offspring in the company of those who establish Ṣalāh.



AND ENJOIN ṢALĀH UPON YOUR FAMILY



It is a divine ordainment and great godly instruction. Most people are negligent of this command, namely the saying of Allāh, Glorified and Exalted,

﴿وَأۡمُرۡ أَهۡلَكَ بِٱلصَّلَوٰةِ وَٱصۡطَبِرۡ عَلَيۡهَاۖ لَا نَسۡـَٔلُكَ رِزۡقٗاۖ نَّحۡنُ نَرۡزُقُكَۗ وَٱلۡعَٰقِبَةُ لِلتَّقۡوَىٰ ١٣٢﴾

> **"And enjoin prayer upon your family [and people] and be steadfast therein. We ask you not for provision; We provide for you, and the [best] outcome is for [those of] righteousness."** [Sūrah Taha (20):132]

This is a direct command from Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, to His Prophet, the chosen, Muḥammad ibn `Abd Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ), ergo a command to his nation unless there is

evidence that makes exclusive to the Prophet, which does not exist according to the unanimous agreement of scholars. Hence, it is obligatory upon every parent or a guardian to pay their children the utmost care and meticulously track the extent of their commitment to the Ṣalāh. It is needless to say that such parent must be a diligent observer of Ṣalāh to act as a role model for his children and encourage them to keep up observing Ṣalāh in the manner Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, enjoined.

The above verse indicates two significant points: First: the individual must be mindful of himself regarding observing Ṣalāh patiently because this life is riddled with countless distractions and diversions capable of reorienting people's attention from the consistent observance of Ṣalāh such as sleep, laziness, or entertainment. The Ṣalāh requires enduring patience and consistency, making it difficult for many people to keep up their pace without boredom. The Prophet (ﷺ) was asked,

((أَيُّ الْعَمَلِ أَحَبُّ إِلَى اللهِ؟ قَالَ: الصَّلَاةُ عَلَى وَقْتِهَا، قَالَ: ثُمَّ أَيٌّ؟ قَالَ: ثُمَّ بِرُّ الْوَالِدَيْنِ))-: ((إِلَّا أَنَّ الصَّبْرَ عَلَى الْـمُحَافظَةِ عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَأَدَائِهَا فِي أَوْقَاتِهَا وَالْـمُحَافظَةِ عَلَى بِرِّ الْوَالِدَيْنِ أَمرٌ لَازِمٌ مُتَكَرِّرٌ دَائِمٌ لَا يَصْبِرُ عَلَى مُرَاقَبَةِ أَمرِ اللهِ فِيهِ إِلَّا الصِّدِّيقُونَ)).

"Which deed is beloved to Allāh the most?" He answered, 'Observing Ṣalāh at their prescribed times.' 'What is next?' it was asked. He said, 'Kindness to the parents.'" Ibn Ḥajar commented on this ḥadīth, "Indeed, consistent observance of Ṣalāh at their

prescribed times and kindness to the parents are repetitive and lasting actions that require considerable patience and commitment to the command of Allāh available only to the sincere."[31]

Second: it instructs the parent to take genuine care of his family and children by raising them on observing the Ṣalāh and tracking their performance. In the same lines as the above verse, it is related by Abū Dāwūd in his 'Sunnan' on the authority of `Abd Allāh ibn `Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ, who reported that the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said,

مُرُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَهُمْ أَبْنَاءُ سَبْعِ سِنِينَ، وَاضْرِبُوهُمْ عَلَيْهَا وَهُمْ أَبْنَاءُ عَشْرٍ، وَفَرِّقُوا بَيْنَهُمْ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ.

"Command your children to pray when they become seven years old, and beat them for it (Ṣalāh) when they become ten years old, and arrange their beds (to sleep) separately."[32]

This highly emphasized follow up is required at an early age such that the parent begins to encourage his children to pray at the age of seven. When the child reaches ten years old, he must be disciplined moderately if he is negligent or abandons the Ṣalāh. If someone were to look at the reality of the Muslim families today,

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[31] Fatḥ al-Bārī: (2/11)

[32] Related by Ahmad (6756), Abū Dāwūd (495), al-Ḥākim (1/311) and it is graded as sound by al-Albānī in 'Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmiʿ' (5868).

one will, unfortunately, find negligence mainly on the part of the father who is himself negligent and unable to act as a role model for his children in observing Ṣalāh consistently. As a result, his children grow up negligent of Ṣalāh because their upbringing is the product of how their fathers raise them. There is no greater mistreatment a father could do than behaving carelessly regarding their observance of the Ṣalāh. Imām ibn al-Qayyim (may Allāh have mercy on him) noted in this regard,

فَمَنْ أَهْمَلَ تَعْلِيمَ وَلَدِهِ مَا يَنْفَعُهُ وَتَرَكَهُ سُدًى؛ فَقَدْ أَسَاءَ إِلَيْهِ غَايَةَ الْإِسَاءَةِ، وَأَكْثَرُ الْأَوْلَادِ إِنَّمَا جَاءَ فَسَادُهُمْ مِنْ قِبَلِ الْآبَاءِ وَإِهْمَالِهِمْ لَهُمْ، وَتَرْكِ تَعْلِيمِهِمْ فَرَائِضَ الدِّينِ وَسُنَنِهِ؛ فَأَضَاعُوهُمْ صِغَارًا فَلَمْ يَنْتَفِعُوا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ، وَلَمْ يَنْفَعُوا آبَاءَهُمْ كِبَارًا.

"A parent who abandons his/her children and behaves carelessly with regards to educating them what is beneficial has mistreated their rights gravely. Most children are corrupt because of the negligence of their fathers, who are reluctant to educate them on the obligations and recommendations of this religion. They have failed them at their young age, and consequently, they grew up useless and could not help their parents when they are old."[33]

This is a dire position to fill. It requires the father to initially be self-correcting to adequately advise those under his responsibility

[33] Tuḥfat al-Mawlūd (229; al-'Arnā'ūṭ edition).

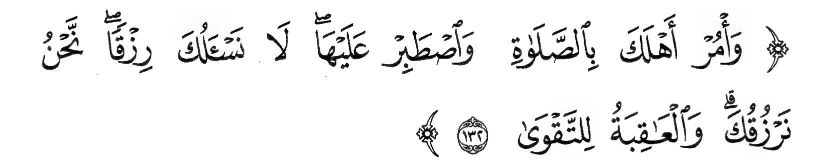
like his wife and his children. He should discipline them to observe Ṣalāh appropriately and consistently. Now, let me talk to you, sons. If Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, blessed you with a father who diligently encourages you to observe Ṣalāh, do not display any annoyance or boredom because he is sparing no effort to save you from the wrath of Allāh and attempts to lead you to what pleases Allāh, Glorified and Exalted. Allāh, Glorified, and Exalted, grants His pleasure only to those who observe Ṣalāh consistently. Consider the praise of Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, of His Prophet Ismā'īl (peace be upon him). Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, said,



"And he used to enjoin on his people prayer and Zakat and was to his Lord pleasing." [Sūrah Maryam (19):55]

Allāh was pleased with him because he followed every path likely to secure the pleasure of Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, at the lead of which is observing Ṣalāh consistently and raising the household to do so.

Zayd ibn Aslam narrated from his father said, "'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb used to spend considerable time standing in Ṣalāh at night. And by the end of the night, he would wake his family for Ṣalāh. He used to say to them, "[Get up to] pray, [get up to] pray." Then he would recite this verse,



“And enjoin prayer upon your family [and people] and be steadfast therein. We ask you not for provision; We provide for you, and the [best] outcome is for [those of] righteousness.”[34]

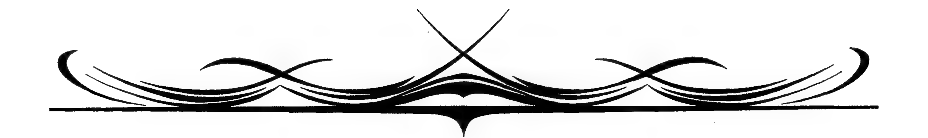
Do you see how the Salaf (may Allāh be pleased and have mercy on them) used to react with this divine instruction? Compare this with the reality of negligence and abandonment of Ṣalāh that many people live today. We seriously need to be consistent in observing Ṣalāh as well as overseeing our children’s commitment to Ṣalāh. We are in a dire need to resort to Allāh sincerely to include our children and us from those who keep up the Ṣalāh. One of the most relevant of supplication in such a context is that of Ibrahim (صَلَّىٰ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) found in the following verse,

﴿ رَبِّ ٱجْعَلْنِى مُقِيمَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ وَمِن ذُرِّيَّتِى ۚ رَبَّنَا وَتَقَبَّلْ دُعَآءِ ﴿٤٠﴾ ﴾

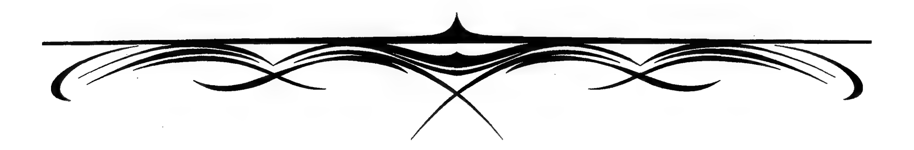
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[34] Related by Mālik in al-Muwaṭṭa’ (n. 389) and it is graded as sound by al-Albānī in his edition of al-Mishkāh (1/390)

"Lord, grant that I and my offspring may keep up the prayer. Our Lord, accept my supplication." [Sūrah Ibrahim (14):40]



THE ṢALĀH IS OBLIGATORY FOR THE BELIEVERS AT PRESCRIBED TIMES



Ṣalāh is the scale of deeds, and its perfection relies solely on the extent of one's faith. This manifests in observing it at its prescribed times. Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, said,



"Prayer is obligatory for the believers at prescribed times." [Sūrah Al-Nisā' (4):103]

Abū Dhar (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) reported that the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said,

صَلِّ الصَّلَاةَ لِوَقْتِهَا

"Observe the Ṣalāh at its prescribed time."[35]

Crucially, observing the Ṣalāh at its due time is a necessary condition for its validity. Those prescribed times are blessed and highlighted on several occasions in the Qur'ān. Their details are clarified in the verbal and actionable Sunnah of the Prophet (صَلَّىٰ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ). Muslims have learned them from the Prophet (صَلَّىٰ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and conveyed it.

Allāh The Almighty said,

﴿ أَقِمِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ لِدُلُوكِ ٱلشَّمْسِ إِلَىٰ غَسَقِ ٱلَّيْلِ وَقُرْءَانَ ٱلْفَجْرِ ۖ إِنَّ قُرْءَانَ ٱلْفَجْرِ كَانَ مَشْهُودًا ﴿٧٨﴾ ﴾

"So, perform the regular prayers in the period from the time the sun is past its zenith till the darkness of the night, and [recite] the Qur'ān at dawn- dawn recitation is always witnessed." [Sūrah Al-'Isrā' (17):78]

He Almighty also said,

﴿ فَسُبْحَٰنَ ٱللَّهِ حِينَ تُمْسُونَ وَحِينَ تُصْبِحُونَ ﴿١٧﴾ وَلَهُ ٱلْحَمْدُ فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَعَشِيًّا وَحِينَ تُظْهِرُونَ ﴿١٨﴾ ﴾

"So, celebrate Allāh's glory in the evening, in the morning- And to Him is [due to all] praise throughout

[35] Related by Muslim (658).

the heavens and the earth. And [exalted is He] at night and when you are at noon." [Sūrah Al-Rūm (13):17-18]

Ibn `Abbās (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and his father) reported that the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said,

أَمَّنِي جِبْرِيلُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلاَمُ عِنْدَ الْبَيْتِ مَرَّتَيْنِ فَصَلَّى بِيَ الظُّهْرَ حِينَ زَالَتِ الشَّمْسُ وَكَانَتْ قَدْرَ الشِّرَاكِ وَصَلَّى بِيَ الْعَصْرَ حِينَ كَانَ ظِلُّهُ مِثْلَهُ وَصَلَّى بِيَ - يَعْنِي الْمَغْرِبَ - حِينَ أَفْطَرَ الصَّائِمُ وَصَلَّى بِيَ الْعِشَاءَ حِينَ غَابَ الشَّفَقُ وَصَلَّى بِيَ الْفَجْرَ حِينَ حَرُمَ الطَّعَامُ وَالشَّرَابُ عَلَى الصَّائِمِ فَلَمَّا كَانَ الْغَدُ صَلَّى بِيَ الظُّهْرَ حِينَ كَانَ ظِلُّهُ مِثْلَهُ وَصَلَّى بِيَ الْعَصْرَ حِينَ كَانَ ظِلُّهُ مِثْلَيْهِ وَصَلَّى بِيَ الْمَغْرِبَ حِينَ أَفْطَرَ الصَّائِمُ وَصَلَّى بِيَ الْعِشَاءَ إِلَى ثُلُثِ اللَّيْلِ وَصَلَّى بِيَ الْفَجْرَ فَأَسْفَرَ ثُمَّ الْتَفَتَ إِلَيَّ فَقَالَ يَا مُحَمَّدُ هَذَا وَقْتُ الأَنْبِيَاءِ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ وَالْوَقْتُ مَا بَيْنَ هَذَيْنِ الْوَقْتَيْنِ

"Gabriel led me in prayer twice at the house (i.e., the Ka'bah). He prayed Ẓuhr prayer with me when the sun had passed the meridian to the extent of the thong of a sandal; he prayed `Asr prayer with me when the shadow of everything was as long as itself; he prayed Maghrib prayer with me when one who is fasting breaks the fast; he prayed `Ishā' prayer with me when the twilight had ended, and he prayed Fajr prayer with me when food

and drink become forbidden to one who is keeping the fast. On the following day, he prayed Ẓuhr prayer with me when his shadow was as long as himself; he prayed `Asr prayer with me when his shadow was twice as long as himself; he prayed Maghrib prayer at the time when one who is fasting breaks the fast; he prayed `Ishā' prayer with me when about a third of the night had passed, and he prayed Fajr prayer with me when there was a fair amount of light. Then turning to me, he said: Muḥammad, this is the time observed by the prophets before you."

The above is clear and well-known times for everyone. Once they are due, the Adhan is announced at the Muslims' masjids, calling on people to '*Ḥayya 'Alā al-Ṣalāh, Ḥayya 'Alā al-Falāḥ*' (Come to Prayer, Come to Success). Indeed, people appreciate going to Ṣalāh in the morning, and they will appreciate piety after death. Now, consider the statement of Gabriel,

هَذَا وَقْتُ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ

"This is the time observed by the prophets before you."

This reflects that the prescribed five times of Ṣalāh were ordained on prophets who preceded the Prophet Muḥammad (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ). Additionally, this proves the great status of those prescribed times, wherein people wake up and stop working. They remind the heedless and call everyone to head to the houses of Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, to perform those Ṣalāh in their prescribed times.

Negligence of Ṣalāh exhibits itself in delaying the observance of Ṣalāh beyond its prescribed time. Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, said,

﴿ ۞ فَخَلَفَ مِنۢ بَعۡدِهِمۡ خَلۡفٌ أَضَاعُواْ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَٱتَّبَعُواْ ٱلشَّهَوَٰتِۖ فَسَوۡفَ يَلۡقَوۡنَ غَيًّا ۝٥٩ ﴾

"but there came after them generations who neglected prayer and were driven by their own desires. These are going to mee evil;" [Sūrah Maryam (19):59] `

Umar ibn `Abd al-`Azīz (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) read

لَمْ تَكُنْ إِضَاعَتُهُمْ تَرْكَهَا، وَلَكِن أَضَاعُوا الْوَقْتَ، وَقَالَ اللهُ تَعَالَى:

﴿ فَوَيۡلٌ لِّلۡمُصَلِّينَ ۝٤ ٱلَّذِينَ هُمۡ عَن صَلَاتِهِمۡ سَاهُونَ ۝٥ ﴾

"Their abonnement of Ṣalāh was not in leaving it altogether but rather in delaying it beyond its prescribed time."[36] Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, said, "So woe to those who pray but are heedless of their prayer." [Al-Māʿūn: 4-5]

Ibn `Abbās (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ and his father) commented,

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36 Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī (18/216; Shākir's edition).

الَّذِينَ يُؤَخِّرُونَ الصَّلَاةَ عَنْ وَقْتِهَا

"It refers to those who delay Ṣalāh beyond its prescribed time."[37]

Delaying Ṣalāh is a grave danger as it proves lax religious commitment. This conduct is alarmed in various Ḥadīths said by our Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) to warn them against missing the prescribed times of Ṣalāh. Some of those Ḥadīths are as follows:

اِبْن عُمَرَ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: ((مَنْ فَاتَتْهُ الْعَصْرُ فَكَأَنَّمَا وُتِرَ أَهْلُهُ وَمَالُهُ.

Ibn Umar (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ and his father) reported that the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

"He who missed his afternoon prayer it is as though he was deprived of his family and property."[38]

It instructs the individual to beware of missing Ṣalāh in the same level of keenness he would be in protecting his wealth and household against loss and deprivation.

Anas (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) reported that the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said,

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[37] Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī (24/631).

[38] Related by Muslim (626).

تِلْكَ صَلَاةُ الْـمُنَافِقِ؛ يَـجْلِسُ يَرْقُبُ الشَّمْسَ، حَتَّى إِذَا كَانَتْ بَيْنَ قَرْنَيِ الشَّيْطَانِ قَامَ فَنَقَرَهَا أَرْبَعًا، لَا يَذْكُرُ اللهَ فِيهَا إِلَّا قَلِيلًا.

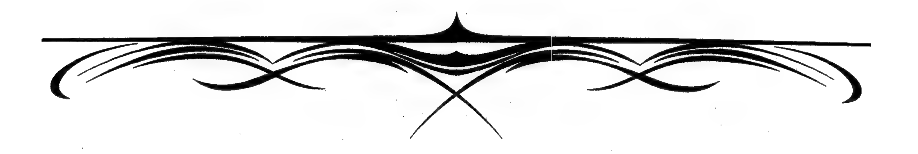
"That is the prayer of the hypocrite. He sits watching the sun, until when it is between the horns of the Shaytan, he stands and pecks out four Rak`ahs, not remembering Allāh in them but a little."

There are many other Ḥadīths in this regard.

How is our condition with Ṣalāh? To what extent are we keen on observing it at its prescribed time? Let us hold ourselves accountable before Allāh does; let us scale our deeds before they are scaled for us. O Allāh, include our children and us among those who keep up the Ṣalāh.



THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE ṢALĀH AND SEEING ALLĀH



The most complete form of bliss for the inhabitants of Paradise is the sight of their Lord, Glorified and Exalted, is He. It is their greatest pleasure in the abode of bliss. Ṣuhayb (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) reported that the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said,

إِذَا دَخَلَ أَهْلُ الْجَنَّةِ الْجَنَّةَ - قَالَ - يَقُولُ اللَّهُ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى تُرِيدُونَ شَيْئًا أَزِيدُكُمْ فَيَقُولُونَ أَلَمْ تُبَيِّضْ وُجُوهَنَا أَلَمْ تُدْخِلْنَا الْجَنَّةَ وَتُنَجِّنَا مِنَ النَّارِ - قَالَ - فَيَكْشِفُ الْحِجَابَ فَمَا أُعْطُوا شَيْئًا أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّظَرِ إِلَى رَبِّهِمْ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ

“When those deserving of Paradise would enter Paradise, Allāh, the Blessed and the Exalted would ask:

'Do you wish Me to give you anything more?' They would say: Have You not brightened our faces? Have You not made us enter Paradise and saved us from Fire? He (the narrator) said: He (Allāh) would lift the veil, and of things given to them, nothing would he dearer to them than the sight of their Lord, the Mighty and the Glorious."[39]

There is a strong connection between Ṣalāh and the sight of Allāh; and to give this unsurpassed honor, one must be committed to Ṣalāh whereas negligence causes deprivation and loss. This connection is proven by the Qur'ān and Sunnah. In the Qur'ān, Allāh The Almighty said,

﴿ وُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ نَّاضِرَةٌ ﴿٢٢﴾ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهَا نَاظِرَةٌ ﴿٢٣﴾ وَوُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ بَاسِرَةٌ ﴿٢٤﴾ تَظُنُّ أَن يُفْعَلَ بِهَا فَاقِرَةٌ ﴿٢٥﴾ كَلَّآ إِذَا بَلَغَتِ ٱلتَّرَاقِىَ ﴿٢٦﴾ وَقِيلَ مَنْ ۜ رَاقٍ ﴿٢٧﴾ وَظَنَّ أَنَّهُ ٱلْفِرَاقُ ﴿٢٨﴾ وَٱلْتَفَّتِ ٱلسَّاقُ بِٱلسَّاقِ ﴿٢٩﴾ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ يَوْمَئِذٍ ٱلْمَسَاقُ ﴿٣٠﴾ فَلَا صَدَّقَ وَلَا صَلَّىٰ ﴿٣١﴾ وَلَٰكِن كَذَّبَ وَتَوَلَّىٰ ﴿٣٢﴾ ﴾

"On that Day there will be radiant faces, looking towards their Lord, and on that day, there will be the sad and despairing faces of those who realize that a great calamity is about to befall them. Truly, when the

[39] Related by Muslim: (181).

soul reaches the collarbone, when it is said, 'Could any charm-healer save him now?'; when he knows it is the final parting when his legs are brought together: on that day, he will be driven towards your Lord. He neither believed nor prayed but denied the truth and turned away." [Sūrah Al-Qiyāmah (75):22-32]

The verse, "**On that Day there will be radiant faces,**" means their faces will be delighted and bright, looking at their Lord with their physical sight. Al-Ḥasan al-Basrī noted,

وَحُقَّ لَهَا أَنْ تَنْضُرَ وَهِيَ تَنْظُرُ إِلَى الْـخَالِـقِ

"It [believer's face] should be radiant as it is looking directly at the Creator."[40]

The next topic of the verses are those whose faces are sad, despairing, and frowning. One of their [evil] deeds is the abonnement of Ṣalāh. Deductively, this shows that the people with radiant faces looking at Allāh are the ones who are committed to Ṣalāh.

In the Sunnah, Jarīr ibn ʿAbd Allāh (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) reported that the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said,

[40] Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī (24/72).

إِنَّكُمْ سَتَرَوْنَ رَبَّكُمْ كَمَا تَرَوْنَ هَذَا الْقَمَرَ لاَ تُضَامُّونَ فِي رُؤْيَتِهِ، فَإِنِ اسْتَطَعْتُمْ أَنْ لاَ تُغْلَبُوا عَلَى صَلاَةٍ قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ وَصَلاَةٍ قَبْلَ غُرُوبِ الشَّمْسِ، فَافْعَلُوا

"You all will see your Lord as you see this full moon, and you will have no trouble in seeing Him. So, if you can avoid missing (through sleep or business, etc.) a prayer before sunrise (Fajr) and a prayer before sunset (ʿAsr), you must do so."[41]

Jarīr then recited,

﴿ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ ٱلشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ غُرُوبِهَا ﴾

"and exalt [Allāh] with praise of your Lord before the rising of the sun and before its setting." [Sūrah Taha (20):130]

This ḥadīth indicates the connection between Ṣalāh and the sight of Allāh. Ibn Rajab (may Allāh have mercy upon him) noted, "The reason for enjoining to keep up performing those two Ṣalāh immediately after the sight of Allāh. It reads, 'The highest point in Paradise is seeing Allāh, Glorified and Exalted. Similarly, the most honorable act in the worldly life is [observing] those two Ṣalāh. So, by observing them consistently, the likelihood of

[41] Related by al-Bukhārī (554) and Muslim (633).

entering Paradise and seeing Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, therein is very strong."[42]

Undoubtedly, once the Companions heard the statement of the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰٓ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ),

إِنَّكُمْ سَتَرَوْنَ رَبَّكُمْ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ كَمَا تَرَوْنَ هَذَا الْقَمَرَ، لَا تُضَامُونَ فِي رُؤْيَتِهِ.

"You people will see your Lord as you see this full moon, and you will have no trouble in seeing Him,"

they must have entertained a passionate longing. They must have inquired about the means to secure such a superb goal. And because the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰٓ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) would ask a question without clearly provide an answer for it, he added,

فَإِنِ اسْتَطَعْتُمْ أَنْ لاَ تُغْلَبُوا عَلَى صَلاَةٍ قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ وَصَلاَةٍ قَبْلَ غُرُوبِ الشَّمْسِ، فَافْعَلُوا.

"if you can avoid missing (through sleep or business, etc.) a prayer before sunrise (Fajr) and a prayer before sunset (ʿAṣr), you must do so."

He (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰٓ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) indicated that seeing Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, on the Day of Judgment will not be earned by mere wishing. Allāh The Almighty said,

[42] Fatḥ al-Bārī (4/323).

﴿ لَّيۡسَ بِأَمَانِيِّكُمۡ وَلَآ أَمَانِيِّ أَهۡلِ ٱلۡكِتَٰبِۗ ﴾

"It will not be according to your hopes or those of the People of the Book." [Sūrah Al-Nisā' (4):123]

Instead, it demands diligence and strong commitment. Therefore, the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) explained how one can earn the seeing of Allāh, Glorified, and Exalted. One of them is observing the two Ṣalāh, Fajr, and `Aṣr. On account of which there is abundant evidence speaking to their excellence. They are single out of all the remaining Ṣalāh because they present a burden for many people. A person diligent enough to observe them consistently will find no trouble in observing the remaining Ṣalāh. Fajr, in particular, is the key prayer of the day; whomever Allāh blesses to wake up to perform, it will be enabled to perform the remaining Ṣalāh of the day. Interestingly, the individual's behavior with regards to Fajr Ṣalāh sets the mode for his day. One of the Salaf remarked, "Your day is like your camel; if you hold its front, the rear will follow suit."

The clause, **"so if you can avoid missing,"** lays out the fact that this worldly life is full of distractions diverting the individual's attention from keeping up with those two Ṣalāh. Those distractions are comparatively more in our time. Some people are distracted from Ṣalāh, the joy of the believer, by just drinking a cup of tea, others by an idle and immoral conversation, others by null entertainment, and others by sleeping and laziness. Furthermore, the ḥadīth shows that sound belief influences the individual's behavior; the more faithful and unwavering the individual, the more pious, diligent, and committed to the

obedience of Allāh. Due to such a strong connection between the Ṣalāh and seeing Allāh on the Day of Judgment, our Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) used to ask Allāh, after his Ṣalāh, to grant such a great pleasure and reward.

ʿAṭāʾ ibn al-Sāʾib narrated from his father who reported: " ʿAmmār ibn Yāsir led us in prayer, and he made it brief. Some of the people said to him: 'You made the prayer brief.' He said: 'Nevertheless, I still recited supplications that I heard from the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ).' When he got up and left, a man- he was my father, but he did not name himself- followed him and asked him about that supplication, then he came and told the people:

اللّهُمَّ بِعِلْمِكَ الغَيْبِ وَقُدْرَتِكَ عَلى الْخَلقِ أَحْيِنِي ما عَلِمْتَ الحياةَ خَيْراً لي، وَتَوَفَّنِي إِذا عَلِمْتَ الوَفاةَ خَيْراً لي، اللّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ خَشْيَتَكَ فِي الغَيْبِ وَالشَّهادَةِ، وَأَسْأَلُكَ كَلِمَةَ الحَقِّ فِي الرِّضا وَالغَضَبِ، وَأَسْأَلُكَ القَصْدَ فِي الغِنى وَالفَقْرِ، وَأَسْأَلُكَ نَعيماً لا يَنْفَدُ، وَأَسْأَلُكَ قُرَّةَ عَيْنٍ لا تَنْقَطِعُ وَأَسْأَلُكَ الرِّضا بَعْدَ القَضاءِ، وَأَسْأَلُكَ بَرْدَ الْعَيْشِ بَعْدَ الْمَوْتِ، وَأَسْأَلُكَ لَذَّةَ النَّظَرِ إِلى وَجْهِكَ وَالشَّوْق

إِلَـى لِقَـائِـكَ، فِي غَـيـرِ ضَـرّاءَ مُضِـرَّةٍ، وَلا فِتْـنَةٍ مُضِـلَّةٍ، اللّهُـمَّ زَيِّـنّا بِزِينَـةِ الإِيـمانِ، وَاجْـعَلنا هُـداةً مُهْـتَدين

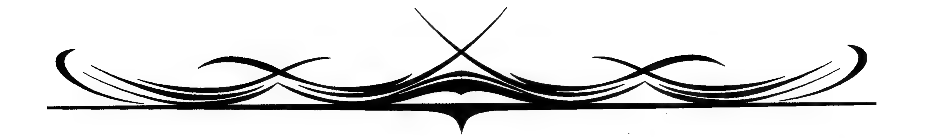
"Allāhumma bi 'ilmikal-ghaiba wa qudratika 'alal-khalqi ahyini ma 'alimtal-hayata khairan li, wa tawaffani idha 'alimtal-wafata khairan li. Allāhumma as'aluka khashyataka fil-ghaibi wash-shahadati wa as'aluka kalimatul-aqua fir-rida'i wal ghadab, wa as'alukal-qasda fil faqr wal-ghina, wa as'aluka na'iman la yanfadu wa as'aluka qurrata ainan la tanqati'u wa as'alukar-rida'i ba'dal-qada'i wa as'aluka bardal 'aishi ba'dal-mawti, wa as'aluka ladhatan-nazari ila wajhika wash-shawqa ila liqa'ika fi fitnatin mudillatin, Allāhumma zayyina dizinatil-Imani waj'alna hudatan muhtadin"

(O Allāh, by Your knowledge of the unseen and Your power over creation, keep me alive so long as You know that living is good for me and cause me to die when You know that death is better for me. O Allāh, cause me to fear You in secret and in public. I ask You to make me right in speech in times of pleasure and of anger. I ask You to make me moderate in times of wealth and poverty. And I ask You for everlasting delight and joy that will never cease. I ask You to make me pleased with that which You have decreed and for an easy life after death. I ask You for the sweetness of looking upon Your face and a longing to meet You in a manner that does not entail a calamity that will bring about harm or a

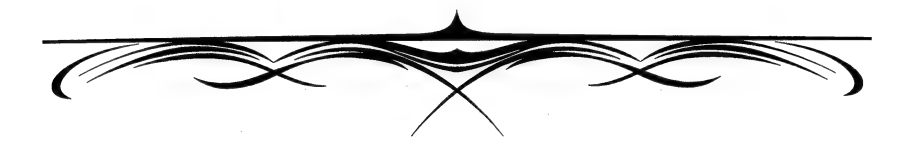
trial that will cause deviation. O Allāh, beautify us with the adornment of faith and make us among those who guide and are rightly guided."[43]

May Allāh bless us with a commitment to Ṣalāh, and may He, Glorified and Exalted, grant us the pleasure of looking at His Face, longing to meet Him in a manner that does not entail a calamity that will bring about harm or a trial that will cause deviation.

[43]Related by al-Nasāʾī (1305) and it is graded as sound by al-Albānī in his edition of ʾal-Mishkāh (2/769)



THREE GREAT PROPHETIC COMMANDMENTS



Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, has granted our Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) the power of verbal elucidation and impeccable literary prowess. Anyone paying strong ties to the Sunnah and the guidance of the best of creation (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) will gain success in this worldly life and the hereafter. This chapter briefly addresses a very impactful commandment of our noble Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ), inclusive of all sorts of goodness. Abū ʾAyyūb al-Anṣārī (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) reported:

"A man came to the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and requested, 'O Messenger of Allāh, admonish me (teach me, according to another version) but make it concise.' He said:

إِذَا قُمْتَ فِي صَلاَتِكَ فَصَلِّ صَلاَةَ مُوَدِّعٍ وَلاَ تَكَلَّمْ بِكَلاَمٍ تَعْتَذِرُ مِنْهُ وَأَجْمِعِ الْيَأْسَ عَمَّا فِي أَيْدِي النَّاسِ

'When you stand to pray, pray like a man bidding farewell. Do not say anything for which you will have to apologize later. And give up hope for what other people have.'"[44]

This is a good (Ḥasan) ḥadīth due to the various versions supporting it. This great ḥadīth included three critical commandments inclusive of all the good; whoever understands and implements them will gain all the good in this worldly life and hereafter.

First commandment: paying due attention to Ṣalāh and performing it adequately.

Second commandment: be mindful of verbal utterances.

Third commandment: encouragement of contentment and attaching one's heart to Allāh alone.

First commandment: our Prophet (صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيۡهِوَعَلَىٰٓ آلِهِوَسَلَّمَ) called on the individual to pray as if he is bidding farewell. In such a situation, a traveler would not usually leave no feeling unexpressed. Typically, a person who travels with hopes of return would not entertain similar thoughts like the one traveling without ever returning. So, when the individual prays with the mindset this may be his last Ṣalāh, he would perform it diligently and be mindful of every bow, prostration, obligatory, and recommended actions. Accordingly, every believer should recall this commandment at every Ṣalāh to inspire the feeling of last Ṣalāh. Perfecting the Ṣalāh drives the individual to embrace virtues and

[44] Related by Ahmad (23498), ibn Maja (4171), and check 'Al-Ṣaḥīḥah' (401)

acts of good just as it alienates him from every evil and immorality. It fills his heart with firm belief and imparts the tasteful feeling of faith. At such point, Ṣalāh becomes the joy of one's eye, his comfort, and happiness

Second commandment: to be mindful of verbal utterances. The tongue is the individual's most substantial liability. Once a word is released from the mouth, one no longer owns it in addition to carrying its consequences. For this reason, the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said,

لَا تَكَلَّمْ بِكَلَامٍ تَعْتَذِرُ مِنْهُ غَدًا

"Do not say anything for which you will have to apologize."

In other words, resist your urges from uttering a word that would demand your apology later. As long as you govern your utterances, you own every word; but the word owns you once you say something that requires your apology. The Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) told Mu`ādh (رَضِيَ ٱللَّٰهُ عَنْهُ),

أَلَا أُخْبِرُكَ بِمَلَاكِ ذَلِكَ كُلِّهِ؟ فقُلْت: بَلَى يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ! فَأَخَذَ بِلِسَانِهِ وَقَالَ: كُفَّ عَلَيْكَ هَذَا. قُلْت: يَا نَبِيَّ اللهِ وَإِنَّا لَمُؤَاخَذُونَ بِمَا نَتَكَلَّمُ بِهِ؟ فَقَالَ: ثَكِلَتْكَ أُمُّكَ وَهَلْ يَكُبُّ النَّاسَ عَلَى وُجُوهِهِمْ -أَوْ قَالَ عَلَى مَنَاخِرِهِمْ- إِلَّا حَصَائِدُ أَلْسِنَتِهِمْ؟!

"Shall I not tell you of the basis of all of that?" I said, "Yes, O Messenger of Allāh." So, he took hold of his

tongue and said, "Restrain this." I said, "O Prophet of Allāh, will we be taken to account for what we say with it?" He (صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰٓ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said,

"May your mother be bereaved of you, O Mu`ādh! Is there anything that throws people into the Hellfire upon their faces — or: on their noses — except the harvests of their tongues?"[45]

The tongue is a serious liability as it reported that the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰٓ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said,

إِذَا أَصْبَحَ ابْنُ آدَمَ فَإِنَّ الأَعْضَاءَ كُلَّهَا تُكَفِّرُ اللِّسَانَ فَتَقُولُ اتَّقِ اللَّهَ فِينَا فَإِنَّمَا نَحْنُ بِكَ فَإِنِ اسْتَقَمْتَ اسْتَقَمْنَا وَإِنِ اعْوَجَجْتَ اعْوَجَجْنَا

"When the son of Adam gets up in the morning, all the limbs humble themselves before the tongue and say: 'Fear Allāh for our sake because we are bound by you: (i.e., we will be rewarded or punished as a result of what you do); if you are straight, we will be straight; and if you are crooked, we will become crooked.'"[46]

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[45] Related by Ahmad (22016), al-Tirmidhī (2616) and it is graded as sound by al-Albānī in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmiʿ (5136)

[46] Related by Ahmad (11908), al-Tirmidhī (2407) and it is graded as good by al-Albānī in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmiʿ (351). It is reported by Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī (رَضِيَ ٱللَّٰهُ عَنْهُ).

One other remark can be deduced from the Prophet's comprehensive commandment,

لَا تَكَلَّمْ بِكَلَامٍ تَعْتَذِرُ مِنْهُ غَدًا

"Do not say anything for which you will have to apologize later."

It invites the individual to pause for assessment of every word before it comes out of his mouth; if it is good, he should speak; otherwise, refrain. However, if what he is about to say is questionable, he should also refrain from avoiding uncalculated risks until he has conclusive assessment of its nature. The Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said,

مَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ؛ فَلْيَقُلْ خَيْرًا أَوْ لِيَصْمُتْ

"Whoever believes in Allāh and the Last Day, let him say good or remain silent."[47]

Many people entangle themselves in deadlock situations just by their tongue. They speak unrestrainedly without pondering the unpleasant consequences in this world and the hereafter. A rational person, by contrast, assesses his words and speak mindfully without incurring any apology as our Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) instructed. The time marker 'later' in the topic ḥadīth likely refers to two possible times: when one stands before

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[47] Related by al-Bukhārī (6018) and Muslim (47) on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (رَضِيَ ٱللَّٰهُ عَنْهُ).

Allāh or demands the individual to apologize for what he said. The former meaning is directly related to Ṣalāh because what kind of apology would one have to offer before his Lord for missing the Ṣalāh, the first item of judgment?

Third commandment: it calls on contentment, attaching one's heart to Allāh alone, and completely giving up hope in what others' have. It instructs determination and heartily resolve to disengage desiring anything people have. Instead, one should place his hope in Allāh rather than people. Just as you verbally ask none but Allāh, you must orient your heart to direct hope towards Allāh. One of the most practical means to achieve this is the Ṣalāh that constitutes a connection between you and your Lord. Evidently, the one who gives up hope in what people have leads a life of dignity and prestige. In contrast, the entertaining hopes in what people have leads a life of humiliation and debasement. Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, grants contentment in this world and the hereafter to the one who asks, hopes, and attaches his heart to none but Him. Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, said,

﴿ أَلَيْسَ ٱللَّهُ بِكَافٍ عَبْدَهُۥ ۖ ﴾

"Is Allāh not enough for His servant?" [Sūrah Al-Zumar (39):36]

He Almighty also said,

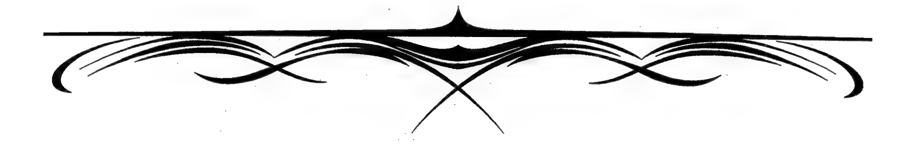


> **"Allāh will be enough for those who put their trust in Him."** [Sūrah Al-Ṭalāq (65):3]

Indeed, success is granted by none but Allāh.



THE OBLIGATION OF THE CONGREGATIONAL ṢALĀH



One of the features of this great religion and an excellent ritual of Islām is the congregational Ṣalāh in the masjid. It is obligatory upon men during traveling and residence and at times of fear and safety. Its proofs are present in the Qur᾿ān, Sunnah, and the practice of Muslims a generation after another. For its cause, masjids were inhabited, and official appointments of Imāms and Muezzins were made. The Ṣalāh Adhan inviting people to 'come to success' was religiously legislated. Allāh The Almighty commanded His Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) to observe the congregational Ṣalāh at the time of battle-driven fear. Allāh The Almighty said,

﴿ وَإِذَا كُنتَ فِيهِمْ فَأَقَمْتَ لَهُمُ الصَّلَوٰةَ فَلْتَقُمْ طَآئِفَةٌ مِّنْهُم مَّعَكَ وَلْيَأْخُذُوٓا۟ أَسْلِحَتَهُمْ فَإِذَا سَجَدُوا۟ فَلْيَكُونُوا۟ مِن

وَرَآئِكُمْ وَلْتَأْتِ طَآئِفَةٌ أُخْرَىٰ لَمْ يُصَلُّوا۟ فَلْيُصَلُّوا۟ مَعَكَ وَلْيَأْخُذُوا۟ حِذْرَهُمْ وَأَسْلِحَتَهُمْ ۗ ﴾

"When you [Prophet] are with the believers, leading them in prayer, let a group of them stand up in prayer with you, taking their weapons with them, and when they have finished their prostration, let them take up their positions at the back. Then let the other group, who have not yet prayed, pray with you, also on their guard and armed with their weapons." [Sūrah Al-Nisā (4):102]

The standard maxim dictates that a command given to the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) is automatically extended to his nation unless there is evidence indicating its specificity to the Prophet. This honorable verse illustrated the obligation of the congregational Ṣalāh because Muslims were not given the concession to leave individually at times of fear. Had it not been obligatory, the prime cause to leave it would have been the battle-driven fear. However, the congregational Ṣalāh at the time of fear does give up many of the obligatory acts in the Ṣalāh itself. Thus, compensating for its obligation. The fear-driven congregational Ṣalāh tolerates excessive movements such as changing posts, carrying weapons, tracking the movements of the enemy, and veering off the Qibla, all for the sole purpose of convening Muslims on a congregational Ṣalāh. Therefore, the above textual proof is one of the most conclusive on the obligation of the congregational Ṣalāh.

Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, said,

﴿ وَأَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتُوا۟ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَٱرْكَعُوا۟ مَعَ ٱلرَّٰكِعِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾ ﴾

"Keep up the prayer, pay the prescribed Zakat, and bow your heads [in worship] with those who bow theirs." [Sūrah Al-Baqarah (2):43]

Allāh commanded that Ṣalāh must be observed in the company of those who bow after He, Glorified and Exalted, commanded that Ṣalāh is to be kept up. It is to be observed in the masjid rather than at his house alone. Furthermore, one other proof of the obligation of the congregational Ṣalāh is reported by Abū Hurayrah (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) that the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said,

إِنَّ أَثْقَلَ صَلاَةٍ عَلَى الْمُنَافِقِينَ صَلاَةُ الْعِشَاءِ وَصَلاَةُ الْفَجْرِ وَلَوْ يَعْلَمُونَ مَا فِيهِمَا لأَتَوْهُمَا وَلَوْ حَبْوًا وَلَقَدْ هَمَمْتُ أَنْ آمُرَ بِالصَّلاَةِ فَتُقَامَ ثُمَّ آمُرَ رَجُلاً فَيُصَلِّيَ بِالنَّاسِ ثُمَّ أَنْطَلِقَ مَعِي بِرِجَالٍ مَعَهُمْ حُزَمٌ مِنْ حَطَبٍ إِلَى قَوْمٍ لاَ يَشْهَدُونَ الصَّلاَةَ فَأُحَرِّقَ عَلَيْهِمْ بُيُوتَهُمْ بِالنَّارِ

"The most burdensome prayers for the hypocrites are the ʿIshāʾ and the Fajr Ṣalāh. If they were to know the blessings they have in store, they would have come to them, even if it was crawling, and I thought that I should order the Ṣalāh to be commenced and command a person to lead people thereof. I should go along with some persons having a bundle of firewood with them to

the people who have not attended the Ṣalāh (in congregation) and would burn their houses with fire."[48]

The Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) labeled the people missing the congregational Ṣalāh in the ḥadīth above as hypocrites, which matches their description in the Qur'ān. Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, said,

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ يُخَٰدِعُونَ ٱللَّهَ وَهُوَ خَٰدِعُهُمْ وَإِذَا قَامُوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ قَامُوا۟ كُسَالَىٰ يُرَآءُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ وَلَا يَذْكُرُونَ ٱللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿١٤٢﴾ ﴾

"The hypocrites try to deceive Allāh, but it is He who causes them to be deceived. When they stand up to pray, they do so sluggishly, showing off in front of people, and remember Allāh only a little." [Sūrah Al-Nisā' (4):142]

Allāh The Almighty said about them,

﴿ وَلَا يَأْتُونَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ إِلَّا وَهُمْ كُسَالَىٰ وَلَا يُنفِقُونَ إِلَّا وَهُمْ كَٰرِهُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾ ﴾

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[48] Related by al-Bukhārī (657) and Muslim (651)

> **“and that they come not to prayer except while they are lazy and that they do not spend except while they are unwilling.”** [Sūrah Al-Tawbah (9):54]

The Prophet (ﷺ) threatened those lagging behind the congregational Ṣalāh to put their houses on fire, which is a severe punishment. Put together, the label of hypocrisy and the threat of fire explicitly indicates the gravity of such wrongdoing that incurs severe punishments in the worldly life and the hereafter.

His statement,

وَلَوْ يَعْلَمُونَ مَا فِيهِمَا لَأَتَوْهُمَا وَلَوْ حَبْوًا

> **“If they were to know the blessings they have in store, they would have come to them, even if it was crawling,”**

Shows that consistent observance of congregational Ṣalāh and paying it its due attention is driven by the more profound concern of the heart that realizes the status of performing the Ṣalāh in congregation. On the other hand, a heart heedless of the value of Ṣalāh nor the status of performing it in congregation will certainly miss observing it. So, if the person lacks proper awareness of the value of praying in the masjid and the status of the congregational Ṣalāh in Islām, he will repeatedly miss the congregation. On this point, there is an exciting story of an ordinary man who complained about the unwillingness of his children to pray in congregation. And their refusal of his continuous attempts to advise them. He told me while moving about his hand,

“It is all about the heart–and he pointed at the heart. Were my children to realize the value and status of the Ṣalāh, they would

not miss it. However, their unwillingness, laziness, and sluggishness are the consequences of the weakness of their hearts and their failure to internalize the value and status of the Ṣalāh."

It is related to Saḥīḥ Muslim:

رَجُلٌ أَعْمَى فَقَالَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ لِي قَائِدٌ يَقُودُنِي إِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ . فَسَأَلَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم أَنْ يُرَخِّصَ لَهُ فَيُصَلِّيَ فِي بَيْتِهِ فَرَخَّصَ لَهُ فَلَمَّا وَلَّى دَعَاهُ فَقَالَ " هَلْ تَسْمَعُ النِّدَاءَ بِالصَّلاَةِ " . فَقَالَ نَعَمْ . قَالَ " فَأَجِبْ

"that a blind man told the Messenger (ﷺ), I have no one to guide me to the masjid. He, therefore, asked. Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) permission to pray in his house. He (tee Prophet) granted him permission. When the man turned away, he called him and said, 'Do you hear the call to prayer?' He said, 'Yes.' He (the Prophet then) said, 'Respond to it.'"[49]

Although this blind man presented many excuses, he was still commanded to observe the congregational Ṣalāh. So, how about those who miss it without any valid excuse while living near the masjid, hearing the Adhan loud and clear. He is called upon [in Adhan], but he refuses to answer, commanded. Still, he refuses to comply and sins but refuses to repent.

[49] N. (653)

There is a similar ḥadīth of ibn Maktūm who he told the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ),

إِنَّ الْمَدِينَةَ كَثِيرَةُ الْهَوَامِّ وَالسِّبَاعِ . فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم " أَتَسْمَعُ حَيَّ عَلَى الصَّلاَةِ حَيَّ عَلَى الْفَلاَحِ فَحَيَّ هَلاَ

"There are many poisonous insects and wild beasts in Medina, and I am blind. Please grant me permission to perform Ṣalāh at home." He (ﷺ) inquired whether he could hear the call: *Ḥayya al- Ṣalāh; Ḥayya 'ala al-Falāh* (Come to the prayer, come to the success). When he replied in affirmative, the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) directed him to come (to the masjid) for prayer."[50]

In another narration, Ibn `Abbās (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and his father) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said,

مَنْ سَمِعَ النِّدَاءَ فَلَمْ يَأْتِهِ فَلَا صَلَاةَ لَهُ إِلَّا مِنْ عُذْرٍ

"Whoever hears the call and does not come, his prayer is not valid, except for those who have an excuse."[51]

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[50] Related by Ahmad (15490), Abū Dāwūd (553), al-Nasā'ī (851), it is graded as sound by al-Albānī in Ṣaḥīḥ Abū Dāwūd (562).

[51] Related by ibn Maja in 'al-Sunnan' (793) and it is graded as sound by al-Albānī in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi (6300).

This ḥadīth is plainly explicit in proving the obligation of the congregational Ṣalāh. Some scholars have used this ḥadīth to hold that Ṣalāh prayed individually without an excuse is invalid based on the saying of the Prophet (peace and blessing be upon him),

فَلَا صَلَاةَ لَـهُ إِلَّا مِنْ عُذْرٍ

"his prayer is not valid, except for those who have an excuse."

However, the most accurate scholarly opinion is that Ṣalāh prayed individually is still valid, although the individual has sinned and incurred the wrath of Allāh for missing the congregation without a valid excuse.

It is reported that the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) used to inquire about who attended Ṣalāh. Ubay ibn Ka`b (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) reported that the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said,

أَشَاهِدٌ فُلاَنٌ ؟ قَالُوا لاَ . قَالَ " إِنَّ هَاتَيْنِ الصَّلاَتَيْنِ أَثْقَلُ الصَّلَوَاتِ
عَلَى الْمُنَافِقِينَ وَلَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ مَا فِيهِمَا لأَتَيْتُمُوهُمَا وَلَوْ حَبْوًا

"Is so and so present?' They said, 'No.' He (again) asked, 'Is so and so present?' They replied, 'No.' He then said, 'These two prayers– meaning Fajr and 'Ishā'– are the ones which are most burdensome to hypocrites. Had they known what they contain (i.e.,

blessings), they would have come to them, even if it was crawling."[52]

As mentioned earlier, the first generation of this nation have paid Ṣalāh their utmost attention, as reported by ibn Mas`ūd (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ),

لَقَدْ رَأَيْتُنَا-يَعْنِي أَصْحَابَ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ-وَمَا يَتَخَلَّفُ عَنْهَا-أَي الصَّلَاةَ-إِلَّا مُنَافِقٌ مَعْلُومُ النِّفَاقِ، وَلَقَدْ كَانَ الرَّجُلُ يُؤْتَى بِهِ يُهَادَى بَيْنَ الرَّجُلَيْنِ حَتَّى يُقَامَ فِي الصَّفِّ.

"I had seen the time when no one stayed behind except a well-known hypocrite. I also saw that a man was brought swaying (on account of weakness) between two men till he was set up in a row (in the masjid)."

If one of the Companions could not walk due to an illness or senility, they would hold him and help him walk until he stands in the row to perform the congregational Ṣalāh. All because they have internalized the value and status of the Ṣalāh deeply. Because their hearts greatly appreciated the status of the Ṣalāh, their frail bodies followed suit. They moved to attend the congregational Ṣalāh in the masjid. Furthermore, we witnessed some of the righteous old people who would come to the masjid in a fragile physical condition. They could barely stand, but they had the resolve to endure their weakness just to observe the congregational Ṣalāh in the masjid as they were commanded.

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[52] Related by Abū Dāwūd (554), al-Nasā'ī (843), it is graded as good by al-Albānī in Ṣaḥīḥ Abū Dāwūd (563).

Their consistency is the outcome of their sublime hearts and great appreciation of the status of the Ṣalāh. As for those with sound and healthy bodies who miss the congregational Ṣalāh, their unwillingness is the product of the weakness of their hearts and their failure to grasp the status and value of Ṣalāh.

Sa`īd ibn al-Musayyib (may Allāh have mercy upon him) said,

مَا فَاتَتْنِي صَلَاةُ الْـجَمَاعَةِ مُنْذُ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً

"I have not missed a single congregational Ṣalāh for forty years."[53]

Now, how many people miss congregational Ṣalāh in a week or even a single day? Fortunately, Allāh, Glorified, and Exalted have blessed the senior people with the wheelchair. Some of them push their children to wheel them to the masjid just to observe the congregational Ṣalāh in the masjid despite their weak physical condition, something that makes us reminisce about the old days of the honorable Salaf. Is it nor appropriate for the youth enjoying the sound and healthy physical conditions to heed the example of those seniors? They should seize this opportunity to internalize the value and status of Ṣalāh rather than living alien to the good and deprived of excellence and high status before Allāh, Glorified, and Exalted.

The location of the congregation Ṣalāh is at the masjid where,

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[53] Related by ibn Sa`d in al-Ṭabaqāt (5/131) and Abū Nu`aym in al-Ḥilyah (2/162).

﴿ أَذِنَ ٱللَّهُ أَن تُرۡفَعَ وَيُذۡكَرَ فِيهَا ٱسۡمُهُۥ ﴾

"Allāh has ordained that they are raised high and that His name is remembered in them." [Sūrah Al-Nūr (24):36]

The Masjid is the joy of the people of faith and their place of comfort and happiness. It is the most beloved place to Allāh. This fact is perfectly realized by every individual who consistently prays at the masjid and is full of sincerity to Allāh, Glorified, and Exalted. When you hear their words in the description of the masjid, they would typically say that the masjid is where their worries and distress are alleviated and replaced with comfort and tranquility.

It should be added that praying the congregational Ṣalāh in the masjid, as commanded by Allāh and His Messenger, is one of the sublime rituals of Islām and a distinct sign of masculinity. Allāh, the Lord of the worlds, said,

﴿ أَذِنَ ٱللَّهُ أَن تُرۡفَعَ وَيُذۡكَرَ فِيهَا ٱسۡمُهُۥ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُۥ فِيهَا بِٱلۡغُدُوِّ وَٱلۡأٓصَالِ ٣٦ رِجَالٞ لَّا تُلۡهِيهِمۡ تِجَٰرَةٞ وَلَا بَيۡعٌ عَن ذِكۡرِ ٱللَّهِ وَإِقَامِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ ﴾

"In masjids which Allāh has ordained that they are raised high and that His name is remembered in them, with men in them celebrating His glory morning and evening: men who are not distracted, either by

commerce or profit, from remembering God, keeping up the prayer." [Sūrah Al-Nūr (24):36-37]

So how fulfilled is the masculinity of those who lag behind the congregational Ṣalāh, depreciate, and abandon it? Imām ibn al-Qayyim (may Allāh have mercy upon him) said,

"Whoever pondered carefully on the Sunnah will come to the conclusion that observing the congregational Ṣalāh in the masjid is an individual obligation that is only tolerated in the presence of a valid excuse. So, abandoning the congregational Ṣalāh without a valid excuse is akin to abandoning the congregation of Muslims [at any major event]. In this manner, all the Ḥadīths addressing this topic are in reconciliation."[54]

In a fatwa issued by the Permanent Committee of Fatwa in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia–may Allāh preserve it—,

"Observing the [congregational] Ṣalāh is an individual obligation whose evidence is found in the Qur'ān and Sunnah."[55]

They [the members of the committee (may Allāh preserve those who are alive and have mercy on those who died from them)] cited several proofs from the Qur'ān and Sunnah as follows:

The Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said,

54 'Al-Ṣalāh' (118)

[55] Fatāwā al-Lajna al-Dā'ima (7/284- fatwa n. (141).

إِذَا تَوَضَّأَ الرَّجُلُ فَأَحْسَنَ الْوُضُوءَ ثُمَّ خَرَجَ إِلَى الصَّلاَةِ لاَ يُخْرِجُهُ أَوْ قَالَ لاَ يَنْهَزُهُ إِلاَّ إِيَّاهَا لَمْ يَخْطُ خُطْوَةً إِلاَّ رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ بِهَا دَرَجَةً أَوْ حَطَّ عَنْهُ بِهَا خَطِيئَةً

"When the individual performs his ablution properly and proceeds towards the masjid with the sole purpose of performing Ṣalāh in congregation, he does not take a step without being raised a degree (in rank) for it and having a sin remitted for it, till he enters the masjid."[56]

Abū Hurayrah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) reported that the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said,

أَلاَ أَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَى مَا يَمْحُو اللَّهُ بِهِ الْخَطَايَا وَيَرْفَعُ بِهِ الدَّرَجَاتِ " . قَالُوا بَلَى يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ . قَالَ " إِسْبَاغُ الْوُضُوءِ عَلَى الْمَكَارِهِ وَكَثْرَةُ الْخُطَا إِلَى الْمَسَاجِدِ وَانْتِظَارُ الصَّلاَةِ بَعْدَ الصَّلاَةِ فَذَلِكُمُ الرِّبَاطُ

"Should I not direct you to something by which Allāh obliterates the sins and elevates (your) ranks.' They said: 'Yes, O Messenger of Allāh.' He said, "Performing ablution properly, even in difficulty, frequently going to the masjid, and waiting eagerly for the next Ṣalāh after

[56] Related by al-Bukhārī (647) and Muslim (649).

a Ṣalāh is over; indeed, that is Al-Ribāt (commitment); indeed, that is Al-Ribāt."[57]

The Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said,

مَنْ غَدَا إِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ أَوْ رَاحَ أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُ فِي الْجَنَّةِ نُزُلاً كُلَّمَا غَدَا أَوْ رَاحَ.

"He who goes to the mosque at dawn or dusk (for Ṣalāh), Allāh prepares a hospitable abode for him in Paradise, whenever he walks to it or comes back from it."[58]

The devil –we seek refuge in Allāh from him– is very diligent in diverting the Muslim from attending such congregational Ṣalāh because he perfectly realizes that negligence of this Ṣalāh entails alienation from the remaining Islāmic rituals and loss of all the good because a person who does not pray lacks religiosity and would not again any share [of good] in Islām. The Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said,

آخِرُ مَا تَفْقِدُونَ مِنْ دِينِكُمُ الصَّلَاةُ

[57] Related by Muslim (251).

[58] Related by al-Bukhārī (662) and Muslim (669).

"The last thing you lose from your religion is Ṣalāh."[59]

So, the devil would employ various means to divert the Muslim. He would not spare any effort to drive him off his proper course. Still, if he failed to do so, he would scheme to alienate the Muslim from attending the congregational Ṣalāh, then step up to enticing him to delay it beyond its prescribed time. If he still failed to do so, he would beautify laziness and delay from rushing to the masjid until he misses some of the Ṣalāh just to deprive him of the virtue of catching the beginning of Ṣalāh. So, be mindful of Allāh— may Allāh preserve you. Maintain such a great ritual and perform it in the houses of Allāh in congregation in compliance with the command of Allāh in His Book and His Messenger in the Sunnah, perhaps you may achieve success. By Allāh's kindness, we ask Him, Glorified and Exalted, and beg to Him in His beautiful names and high attributes to include us among those who keep up the congregational Ṣalāh in the masjid. May Allāh aid us to do so, for He is the One who accepts the supplication, the One in Whom we should hope. Allāh suffices us, for He is the best disposer of affairs

[59] Related by al-Khalāl in al-Sunnah (1391), al-Ṭabarānī in al-Kabīr (9/141), and al-Ḥākim (4/549); check al-Ṣaḥīḥah (1739).



ATTENDING FAJR IN CONGREGATION



Ibn Shihāb narrated from Abū Bakr ibn Sulaymān ibn Abū Ḥathamah that ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) have not seen Sulaymān ibn Abū Ḥathamah in the masjid during the Fajr Ṣalāh. Sulaymān's house was between the Prophetic masjid and the market; so, when ʿUmar went to the market, he passed by al-Shifāʾ Bint ʿAbd Allāh, the mother of Sulaymān. He asked her,

لَمْ أَرَ سُلَيْمَانَ فِي الصُّبْحِ! فَقَالَتْ: إِنَّهُ بَاتَ يُصَلِّي فَغَلَبَتْـهُ عَيْنَاهُ-أَي أَنَّ تَأَخُّرَهُ عَنْ صَلَاةِ الصُّبْحِ كَانَ بِسَبَبِ قِيَامِهِ لِصَلَاةِ اللَّيْلِ فَغَلَبَتْهُ عَيْنَاهُ فَنَامَ؛ فَلَمْ يُدْرِكْ صَلَاةَ الصُّبْحِ-،فَقَالَ عُمَرُ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ: ((لَأَنْ أَشْهَدَ صَلَاةَ الصُّبْحِ فِي الْـجَمَاعَةِ أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِنْ أَنْ أَقُومَ لَيْلَةً)).

"I have not seen Sulaymān in the Fajr Ṣalāh." She answered, 'He spent the night standing in Ṣalāh, but he was overtaken by sleep and missed the Fajr Ṣalāh. `Umar (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) replied, "I should attend the Fajr Ṣalāh in congregation rather than stand the whole night in Ṣalāh."[60]

Kindly ponder on this great piece of advice and distinguished understanding [of Islām]. On account of the advice, `Umar (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) used to check on people to see if they attended the congregational Ṣalāh to offer his advice for the latecomers. His conduct takes after the example of the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) mentioned earlier when Ubay ibn Ka`b (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) reported that the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said,

أَشَاهِدٌ فُلَانٌ؟ قَالُوا: لَا، قَالَ: أَشَاهِدٌ فُلَانٌ؟ قَالُوا: لَا، قَالَ: ((إِنَّ هَاتَيْنِ الصَّلَاتَيْنِ أَثْقَلُ الصَّلَوَاتِ عَلَى الْـمُنَافِقِينَ، وَلَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ مَا فِيهِمَا-أَي مِنَ الْأَجْرِ-لَأَتَيْتُمُوهُمَا وَلَوْ حَبْوًا عَلَى الرُّكَبِ.

"Is so and so present?' They said, 'No.' He (again) asked, 'Is so and so present?' They replied, 'No.' He then said, 'These two prayers– meaning Fajr and 'Ishā'– are the ones which are most burdensome to hypocrites. Had they known what they contain (i.e.,

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[60] Related by Mālik in his al-Muwaṭṭa' (432) and it is graded by sound by al-Albānī in his edition of al-Mishkāh (1/338).

blessings), they would have come to them, even if it was crawling."

As for his distinguished understanding [of Islām], his commentary on Sulaymān's night prayer reflects his full awareness of the magnitude of this obligation and prestigious status. He said, "I should attend the Fajr Ṣalāh in congregation rather than stand the whole night in Ṣalāh." There is a precedent for such a statement reported by ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān, who heard the Prophet (ﷺ) saying,

مَنْ صَلَّى الْعِشَاءَ فِي جَمَاعَةٍ؛ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَامَ نِصْفَ اللَّيْلِ، وَمَنْ صَلَّى الصُّبْحَ فِي جَمَاعَةٍ؛ فَكَأَنَّمَا صَلَّى اللَّيْلَ كُلَّهُ.

"One who performs 'Ishā' prayer in congregation, is as if he has performed the Ṣalāh for half of the night. And one who performs the Fajr prayer in congregation is as if he has performed the Ṣalāh the whole night."[61]

The above is a very short summary of the status and great reward of the Fajr Ṣalāh; so, how is our conduct and commitment to this Ṣalāh? Consider the following report of ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb at his last breaths highlighting the substantial attention he paid to the Ṣalāh. Al-Miswār ibn Makhramah said:

[61] Related by Muslim (656).

دَخَلْتُ عَلَى عُمَرَ مِنَ اللَّيْلَةِ الَّتِي طُعِنَ فِيهَا أُوقِظُهُ لِصَلَاةِ الصُّبْحِ- وَتَأَمَّلْ -رَعَاكَ اللهُ- مِنَ اللَّيْلَةِ الَّتِي طُعِنَ فِيهَا أُوقِظُهُ لِصَلَاةِ الصُّبْحِ-، فَقَالَ: نَعَمْ؛ وَلَا حَظَّ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ لِـمَنْ تَرَكَ الصَّلَاةَ، وَقَامَ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ الْفَجْر وَجُرْحُهُ يَثْعَبُ دَمًا.

"He had visited `Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb on the night he was stabbed and had woken him up for the Fajr Ṣalāh, and Umar had said, "Yes. Whoever abandons Ṣalāh will get nothing from Islām," and he did the prayer with blood pouring from his wound."[62]

This story so expressly reflected the sublime status of the Ṣalāh and how greatly they appreciated it. They were eager to observe it consistently despite the [difficult] circumstances and conditions, even if it was during their encounter of the enemy in the middle of Jihad. `Umar insisted on praying even though his wound was still gushing out blood. We must indeed hold ourselves accountable concerning this obligation because abandoning it will ease the abandonment of all other rituals, not mention there is no share in Islām for whoever abandons the Ṣalāh as `Umar (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) said.

We now live in a world full of distractions. `Umar (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) reprimanded the latecomer to the Fajr Ṣalāh who overslept because he spent the night standing in the Ṣalāh. So, should be

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[62] Related by Mālik in 'al-Muwaṭa' (51), al-Mirwazī in 'Ta'dhīm Qadr al-Ṣalāh' (923), and it is graded as sound by al-Albānī in 'al-Irwā' (209).

said to those who delay Fajr beyond its due time because they spent the night doing unlawful acts or even doing lawful acts? Since the one who delays the Fajr Ṣalāh beyond its due time because he spent the night doing acts of obedience, such as observing the night Ṣalāh and reciting the Qur'ān, has committed a sin, how about those who spent the night doing something lawful or unlawful? The Fajr Ṣalāh comes at the beginning of the day; so, consistent observance of it is a sign of success and happiness throughout the day, whereas missing it is a waste of the whole day and deprivation of its blessings.

Let us read the following ḥadīth carefully! Abū Hurayrah (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) reported that the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said,

يَعْقِدُ الشَّيْطَانُ عَلَى قَافِيَةِ رَأْسِ أَحَدِكُمْ إِذَا هُوَ نَامَ ثَلاَثَ عُقَدٍ يَضْرِبُ مَكَانَ كُلِّ عُقْدَةٍ عَلَيْكَ لَيْلٌ طَوِيلٌ فَارْقُدْ فَإِنِ اسْتَيْقَظَ فَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ انْحَلَّتْ عُقْدَةٌ فَإِنْ تَوَضَّأَ انْحَلَّتْ عُقْدَةٌ فَإِنْ صَلَّى انْحَلَّتْ عُقَدُهُ فَأَصْبَحَ نَشِيطًا طَيِّبَ النَّفْسِ وَإِلاَّ أَصْبَحَ خَبِيثَ النَّفْسِ كَسْلاَنَ

"Satan ties three knots at the back of your head when you sleep, and he seals the place of each knot with 'You have a long night ahead, so sleep.' If you wake up and remember Allāh, a knot is untied. If you do ablution, a knot is untied. If you pray, a knot is untied. He begins

his morning in a happy and refreshed mood; otherwise, he gets up in bad spirits and sluggish state."[63]

This ḥadīth is about the one missing the Fajr Ṣalāh: he spends his day in a bad spirit and in a sluggish state. On the other hand, if one keeps up the Fajr Ṣalāh at its due time in congregation, he enjoys blessings and happiness throughout the day. Let us also read the following ḥadīth. `Abd Allāh ibn Mas`ūd (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) reported, "A mention was made before the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) of a man who slept throughout the night till morning. The Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) remarked,

ذَاكَ رَجُلٌ بَالَ الشَّيْطَانُ فِي أُذُنَيْهِ-أَوْ قَال- فِي أُذُنِهِ

"He is a man in whose ears Satan urinated."[64]

The scholars have clarified that such urination is actual. The person who spends the night sleeping, having missed the Fajr Ṣalāh, wakes up with an ear defiled with the urination of the devil. Furthermore, Samra ibn Jundub (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) reported a long ḥadīth narrating the Prophet's dream. Part of which reads,

وَإِنَّا أَتَيْنَا عَلَى رَجُلٍ مُضْطَجِعٍ، وَإِذَا آخَرُ قَائِمٌ عَلَيْهِ بِصَخْرَةٍ، وَإِذَا هُوَ يَهْوِي بِالصَّخْرَةِ لِرَأْسِهِ، فَيَثْلَغُ رَأْسَهُ فَيَتَهَدْهَدُ الحَجَرُ هَا هُنَا، فَيَتْبَعُ

[63] Related by al-Bukhārī (1142) and Muslim (776).

[64] Related by al-Bukhārī (3270) and Muslim (774).

الْحَجَرَ فَيَأْخُذُهُ، فَلاَ يَرْجِعُ إِلَيْهِ حَتَّى يَصِحَّ رَأْسُهُ كَمَا كَانَ، ثُمَّ يَعُودُ عَلَيْهِ، فَيَفْعَلُ بِهِ مِثْلَ مَا فَعَلَ الْمَرَّةَ الأُولَى.

"I set out with them, and we came across a man lying down, and behold, another man was standing over his head, holding a big rock. Behold, he was throwing the rock at the man's head, smashing it. When he struck him, the stone rolled away, and he went after it to get it, and no sooner had he returned to this man, his head was healed and restored to its former condition. The thrower (of the rock) then did the same as he had done before."

An explanation of the reason for such punishment, the Prophet (ﷺ) responded at the end of this report,

ثُمَّ قَالَ فِي تِمَامِهِ: ((أَمَّا الرَّجُلُ الأَوَّلُ الَّذِي أَتَيْت عَلَيْهِ يُثْلَغُ رَأْسُهُ بِالْحَجَرِ؛ فَإِنَّهُ الرَّجُلُ يَأْخُذُ الْقُرْآنَ فَيَرْفُضُهُ، وَيَنَامُ عَنِ الصَّلَاةِ الْمَكْتُوبَةِ)).

"As for the first man you came upon, whose head was being smashed with the rock, he is the symbol of the one who studies the Qur'an and then neither recites it nor acts on its orders, and sleeps, neglecting the enjoined prayers."[65]

[65] Related by al-Bukhārī (7047).

One other report on the status of observing the congregational Ṣalāh. `Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) went to the house of Yarbū' to visit him after the latter lost his sight. `Umar told him,

لَا تَدَعِ الْـجُمُعَةَ، وَلَا الصَّلَاةَ فِي مَسْجِدِ رَسُولِ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، فَقَالَ الرَّجُلُ: لَيْسَ لِي قَائِدٌ، قَالَ عُمَرُ: ((نَحْنُ نَبْعَثُ إِلَيْكَ بِقَائِدٍ)) فَبَعَثَ إِلَيْهِ بِغُلَامٍ مِنَ السَّبْيِ.

> **"Never abandon the Friday sermon nor any other Ṣalāh in the Masjid of the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ)." Yarbū' told him, "I have no guide [to take me to the Masjid].' `Umar replied, "I will assign one to you." So, he sent him a boy from the war captives.[66]**

Keep in mind that the age of Yarbū was close to a hundred at this point. Still, `Umar advised to always pray in the masjid of the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ). In an interesting incident that took place in a small village, I have seen a rope extended from a house to the masjid. I asked about its story. I was told that it belongs to an old and blind man without a guide. He holds this rope every Ṣalāh to go back and forth to the masjid. And if `Umar advised a man nearing his hundredth year and lost his sight to pray in the masjid, what should be said to the healthy and strong youth who have the grace of sight? There is indeed excessive negligence of the Ṣalāh; to Allāh, we direct our complaint. We must fear Allāh, Glorified,

[66] Related by al-Ḥākim in his 'al-Mustadrak' (3/559)

and Exalted, and take this issue very seriously with a firm resolve and reliance on Allāh, Glorified, and Exalted. We must abandon procrastination, for there are many who did but died during his procrastination when he was abandoning Ṣalāh and wasting his opportunity.

It should be known that attending the Fajr Ṣalāh in congregation in the masjid is one a sign of true faith and an indicator of the strength of Islām. On the other hand, missing the congregation is proof of a weakness in faith, submission to ill desires, and defeat to lusts. I cannot really conceive how such a person sleep comfortably when Muslims are in the masjids experiencing the Fajr Qur'ān, enjoying the pleasure of listening to the speech of Allāh and living the earthly Paradise. How could it be possible to prefer the pleasure of sleeping to the [greater] pleasure of worship and closeness to Allāh? Only a deprived loser would do so. We seek refuge in Allāh from loss and deprivation

THE OPENING TAKBIR

Al-Tirmidhī narrated in his *Jāmi`*[67], on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik that Allāh's Messenger said,

مَنْ صَلَّى لِلَّهِ أَرْبَعِينَ يَوْمًا فِي جَمَاعَةٍ يُدْرِكُ التَّكْبِيرَةَ الْأُولَى كُتِبَ لَهُ بَرَاءَتَانِ: بَرَاءَةٌ مِنَ النَّارِ، وَبَرَاءَةٌ مِنَ النِّفَاقِ.

> **"Whoever performs Ṣalāh in congregation sincerely for Allāh for forty days, catching the first Takbir, two absolutions are written for him: absolution from the Fire, and absolution from hypocrisy."**

This lofty ḥadīth signifies the great reward and the fairest destination awaiting those who commit themselves to catch the *Takbīrāt al-'Iḥrām* (Opening Takbir). The forty-day period, though highlighted in the ḥadīth, does not imply catching the Opening Takbir throughout this period only. Instead, it indicates that adhering to it for this period is likely to make the individual tastes its sweetness in his heart, so it is no longer a heavy burden to perform. Once achieved, he shall keep up this habit at a regular pace supported by the grace of Allāh, Glorified and Exalted. The "forty-day" period is enough a time to change a person from a condition to another. It is narrated in the two *Ṣaḥīḥs*[68] on the

[67] (240).

[68] Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī (3208, 3332, 6594, 7454), Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim (2643)

authority of 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ūd (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) that The Messenger of Allāh said,

إِنَّ خَلْقَ أَحَدِكُمْ يُجْمَعُ فِي بَطْنِ أُمِّهِ أَرْبَعِينَ يَوْمًا وَأَرْبَعِينَ لَيْلَةً، ثُمَّ يَكُونُ عَلَقَةً مِثْلَهُ، ثُمَّ يَكُونُ مُضْغَةً مِثْلَهُ، ثُمَّ يُبْعَثُ إِلَيْهِ الْمَلَكُ فَيُؤْذَنُ بِأَرْبَعِ كَلِمَاتٍ، فَيَكْتُبُ رِزْقَهُ وَأَجَلَهُ وَعَمَلَهُ وَشَقِيٌّ أَمْ سَعِيدٌ ثُمَّ يَنْفُخُ فِيهِ الرُّوحَ

> **"The creation of you (humans) is gathered in the form of semen in the womb of your mother for forty days, then it becomes a clinging thing in similar (period), then it becomes a lump of flesh in similar (period, then Allāh sends an angel who breathes the life into it."**[69]

Catching the Opening Takbir is an emphasized Sunnah (*Sunna Mu'akkada*). It is mentioned in the ḥadīth, **"Whoever performs Ṣalāh…for Allāh"** out of his pure heart without seeking fame, **"catching the first Takbir"** (i.e., the Opening Takbir) in congregation with the Imām, Allāh will grant him "absolution from the Fire." It means Allāh will not only save him from its roaring flames but will also grant him **"absolution from hypocrisy"** such that he would not act like a hypocrite in this life nor receive the punishment of a hypocrite in the hereafter.

[69] Jāmi' al-Masā'il by Ibn Taymiyyah: (Vol.6 p.134).

The Salaf (may Allāh have mercy on their souls and be pleased with them) had given significant consideration for the Opening Takbir. For example, Wakīʿ ibn al-Jarrāḥ said,

> **"Al-A`mash was close to seventy years, yet he never missed the First Takbir (in congregation). I accompanied him for almost seventy years; I never witnessed him miss a Rak`a."[70]**

Ghassān said,

> **"My nephew, Bishr ibn Manṣūr, said: I have never seen my uncle miss the First Takbir (the Opening Takbir in congregation)."[71]**

Saeed Ibn al-Mousayyib said,

> **"I have never missed the First Takbir (in congregation) for fifty years. Also, I have never seen a man's back of the neck in Ṣalāh for fifty years (i.e., never missed the first row in Ṣalāh)."[72]**

Muḥammad Ibn Samā`a said,

> **"For forty years, I have never missed the First Takbir (in congregation) except for the day my mother died; I only missed one congregational Ṣalāh."[73]**

Abū Dāwūd said,

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[70] Siyar ʾAʿlām al-Nubalā. (Vol. 6 P.228).
[71] Siyar ʾAʿlām al-Nubalā. (Vol. 8 P.360).
[72] Ḥilyah al-ʾAwliyāʾ (Vol.2 p163).
[73] Tārīkh Baghdād: (vol.3 p.298,); Siyar ʾAʿlām al-Nubalā (Vol.10 p.646).

> **"Ibrahim al-Sa'igh was a pious man. Abu Muslim killed him at 'Aranda. Whenever he raised a hammer [for work] but heard the call to Ṣalāh, he would put it down [to go pray]."[74]**

Ibrahim al-Taymī said,

> **"If you witness a man neglecting the First Takbir (in congregation), know that he bears no goodness in him."[75]**

My paternal grandfather from my father's side (may Allāh have mercy on his soul and make him among the inhabitants of the highest point of paradise) was one of the righteous devoted worshippers. He used to enter the masjid every day before the 'Asr Ṣalāh and stays inside until he finishes ʿIshāʾ, and when he enters for Fajr Ṣalāh, he stays until he finishes the Ẓuhr Ṣalāh. I remember that some of the students asked my father, in the presence of my grandfather, about the authenticity of the ḥadīth mentioned above, so he replied that they are authentic. One of the students replied,

> **"Who can withstand this sustainable effort?." When I walked out of the session with my grandfather, I heard him repeating in sorrow, "Who can withstand this sustainable effort?"**

This phrase pained him much, especially that it came out of a knowledge seeker.

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[74] Sunan Abū Dāwūd: (3254).
[75] Ḥilyah al-ʾAwliyāʾ (Vol 4 P.215); Siyar ʾAʿlām al-Nubalā: (Vol.5 P.62).

Scholars held that, unless it appears improper, it is unobjectionable for a person to walk hurriedly if he desired to catch the First Takbir. It is transmitted that the Prophet's Companions (may Allāh be pleased with them) would walk hurriedly if they feared to miss the First Takbir.

Ibn al-Mundhir narrated in his book "*al-Awsaṭ*" on the authority of a man from Tayy, from his father said,

> **"ʿAbdullah (Ibn Masʿūd) used to forbid us from walking hurriedly to Ṣalāh. One night, I saw him rushing, so I said to him, Abū Abd al-Raḥmān! You used to forbid us from walking hurriedly to Ṣalāh, so why are you rushing? He said I would have missed the beginning of the Ṣalāh (i.e., the Opening Takbir) [had I not rushed]."**

Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah said,

> **"This (incident) indicates that rushing to catch the First Takbir is not included in the Prophet's prohibition against walking hurriedly to attend Ṣalāh [in the masjid]. The context of the (prohibiting) ḥadīth indicates that it is prohibited for those who already missed the Opening Takbir (to rush to the masjid). The Prophet prohibited this action when he heard the noise some people made while Ṣalāh was already in action. In another ḥadīth, the Prophet said, "When you hear the Iqama, proceed to the Ṣalāh with calmness and solemnity and do not make haste." The majority of people whose houses are long-distance from the masjid would miss the First Takbir upon answering the Iqama**

once they hear it. There is an excellent reward for those attending the Ṣalāh from its beginning before the Opening Takbir with the Imām. If a person misses a Rak`ah of Ṣalāh, he can make up what he missed. But if he misses the First Takbir with the Imām, he could not make up for it. For this reason, walking hurriedly to catch the First Takbir would be permissible.[76]

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[76] Sharḥ al-ʻUmda: (Vol 1 P. 597).



CALMNESS IN THE ṢALĀH



Neglecting calmness[77] is one of the grave errors some worshipers do while performing Ṣalāh. The Prophet (ﷺ) considered them to be among the worst thieves. Imām Ahmad (ibn Hanbal) narrated in his *Musnad* that the Prophet said,

أَسْوَأُ النَّاسِ سَرِقَةً الَّذِي يَسْرِقُ مِنْ صَلَاتِـهِ، قَالُوا: يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ! كَيْفَ يَسْرِقُ مِنْ صَلَاتِـهِ؟ قَالَ: ((لَا يُتِمُّ رُكُوعَهَا وَلَا سُجُودَهَا)).

"The worst of thieves is the one who steals his Ṣalāh." They said, "How does he steal his Ṣalāh, Messenger of Allāh?" He replied, "He does not bow or prostrate properly." [78]

[77] This chapter is a khutbah I delivered twenty-five years ago.
[78] Musnad Ahmad: (11532) and al-Albānī graded it as sound in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmiʿ: (986).

He (ﷺ) considered this act is worse than stealing money.

Calmness is one of the pillars of Ṣalāh and neglecting it would render Ṣalāh invalid. The Prophet (ﷺ) taught the man who performed Ṣalāh incorrectly,

إِذَا قُمْتَ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ؛ فَكَبِّرْ، ثُمَّ اقْرَأْ مَا تَيَسَّرَ مَعَكَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ، ثُمَّ ارْكَعْ حَتَّى تَطْمَئِنَّ رَاكِعًا، ثُمَّ ارْفَعْ حَتَّى تَعْدِلَ قَائِمًا، ثُمَّ اسْجُدْ حَتَّى تَطْمَئِنَّ سَاجِدًا، ثُمَّ ارْفَعْ حَتَّى تَطْمَئِنَّ جَالِسًا، وَافْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فِي صَلَاتِكَ كُلِّهَا.

"When you stand for prayer, say Takbir (Allāhu-Akbar), and then recite what you know from the Qur᾿ān, and then bow with calmness till you feel at ease then rise from bowing, till you stand straight; and then prostrate calmly (and remain in prostration) till you feel at ease, and then raise (your head) and sit with calmness till you feel at ease; and do likewise in all of your prayers."[79]

From this ḥadīth, scholar deduced that if a man does not bring his backbone to rest while bowing and prostrating, his prayer is invalid. He must perform it again correctly. The prophet ordered the man

[79] Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, ḥadīth No. (757); Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim: (397). It is reported by Abū Hurayrah.

اِرْجَعْ فَصَلِّ؛ فَإِنَّكَ لَمْ تُصَلِّ.

"Go back and pray again as you have not prayed (properly)."

The noble Sunnah contains many Ḥadīths concerning performing and perfecting Ṣalāh. It also warns against giving up calmness or violating its pillars and requirements. For example:

Al-Bukhārī and Muslim narrated on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik that the Prophet said,

أَتِـمُّوا الرُّكُوعَ وَالسُّجُودَ

"Perform the bowing and the prostration properly."[80]

This can be achieved through calmness.

On the authority of '`Alī bin Shaybān said,

صَلَّيْنَا خَلْفَ رَسُولِ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَلَمَحَ بِـمُؤْخِرِ عَيْنِهِ رَجُلًا لَا يُقِيمُ صَلَاتَهُ- يَعْنِي صُلْبَهُ- فِي الرُّكُوعِ وَالسُّجُودِ، فَلَمَّا قَضَى النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ الصَّلَاةَ قَالَ: يَا مَعْشَرَ الْـمُسْلِمِينَ! لَا صَلَاةَ لِـمَنْ لَا يُقِيمُ صُلْبَهُ فِي الرُّكُوعِ وَالسُّجُودِ.

"We performed Ṣalāh behind the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ). He glanced out of the corner of his eye at a man who was not settling his spine when he bowed

[80] Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, ḥadīth No. (6644). Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim: (425)

and prostrated. When the Prophet (صَلَّىٰ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰٓ آلِهِۦ وَسَلَّمَ) finished the prayer, he said, O Muslims, there is no prayer for the one who does not settle his spine when bowing and prostrating."[81]

This ḥadīth indicates that settling the spine and calmness in Ṣalāh is a pillar.

Abu Y'alā narrated in his Musnad that the Prophet (صَلَّىٰ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰٓ آلِهِۦ وَسَلَّمَ) saw a man who was not settling in his bow and was pecking like a rooster when prostrating (i.e., prostrating really fast), he said,

لَوْ مَاتَ هَذَا عَلَى مَا هُوَ عَلَيْهِ لَمَاتَ عَلَى غَيْرِ مِلَّةِ مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

"If he (the man) should die (performing Ṣalāh this way), he would die on a religion other than that of Muḥammad."

This severe warning indicates that whoever performs Ṣalāh this way would have a dreadful doom. May Allāh save us all. Ahmad ibn Hanbal and others narrated on the authority of Abū Hurayrah said,

[81] Ahmad: (16297), Ibn Maja (871), and al-Albānī graded it as sound in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi' (7977).

أَمَرَنِي رَسُولُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بِثَلَاثٍ، وَنَهَانِي عَنْ ثَلَاثٍ....وَنَهَانِي عَنْ نَقْرَةٍ كَنَقْرَةِ الدِّيكِ، وَإِقْعَاءٍ كَإِقْعَاءِ الْكَلْبِ، وَالتِفَاتٍ كَالتِفَاتِ الثَّعْلَبِ.

"The Messenger of Allāh ordered me to do three (good habits), and forbade me to do three (bad habits) …, and forbade me to peck like a rooster (i.e., perform prostration really fast), to squat like a dog, and to turn around here and there (during Ṣalāh) like a fox."[82]

Al-Bukhārī narrated in his Sahīh that Hudhayfah ibn al-Yamān saw a person who was not properly performing the bowing and prostration perfectly. He said to him,

مَا صَلَّيْتَ؟ قَالَ وَأَحْسِبُهُ قَالَ: ((لَوْ مُتَّ مُتَّ عَلَى غَيْرِ سُنَّةِ مُـحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّم)).

"You have not prayed, and if you died, you would die on a religion other than that of Muḥammad."[83]

Ahmad (ibn Hanbal) and others narrated on the authority of Ṭalq ibn `Alī that the Prophet said,

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[82] Musnad Ahmad: (8106) and al-Albānī graded it as good in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Targhīb: (555).
[83] Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī: (791).

لَا يَنْظُرُ اللهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ إِلَى صَلَاةِ عَبْدٍ لَا يُقِيمُ فِيهَا صُلْبَهُ بَيْنَ رُكُوعِهَا وَسُجُودِهَا.

"Allāh will not accept Ṣalāh in which a man does not settle his spine when bowing and when prostrating."[84]

Imām Muslim narrated in his Sahih[85] on the authority of 'A'isha, said,

كَانَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا رَفَعَ رَأْسَهُ مِنَ الرُّكُوعِ لَمْ يَسْجُدْ حَتَّى يَسْتَوِيَ قَائِمًا، وَكَانَ إِذَا رَفَعَ رَأْسَهُ مِنَ السَّجْدَةِ لَمْ يَسْجُدْ حَتَّى يَسْتَوِيَ جَالِسًا.

"When he (the messenger of Allāh) raised his head after bowing, he did not prostrate until he had stood erect; when he raised his head after prostration, he did not prostrate again till he sat up."

Numerous Ḥadīths are indicating that perfecting bowing, prostration, and raising the head in-between during Ṣalāh is one of its pillars without which it would be deemed invalid. Such Ḥadīths are well preserved in the books of Sunnah, such as Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, the four Sunan, and many other books. We have listed above some of them. Hence, every Muslim must perfect his Ṣalāh the way that pleases Allāh, Glorified and

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[84] Musnad Ahmad: (16283) and al-Albānī graded it as good in Ṣaḥīḥah: (2536).
[85] Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim: (498).

Exalted, and complying with the command of the Prophet (ﷺ),

صَلُّوا كَمَا رَأَيْتُمُونِي أُصَلِّي

"Pray as you have seen me praying."[86]

"Consider the following strange scenario: Once hearing the Adhan, a man rushes to prepare himself, marches towards the masjid solely to perform Ṣalāh for the sake of Allāh. He may leave to pray on a rough winter day; facing the wind, rain, and mud; or he may march on a summer day, facing scorpions or wild animals. Still, he insists on performing Ṣalāh in congregation even though he may be sick. He withstands all these difficulties out of his pure love for Ṣalāh. Yet, once he starts to pray, Satan overcomes him so that he would race alongside the Imām in bowing, prostration, and the remaining positions of Ṣalāh. Satan desires to ruin the individual's Ṣalāh and waste his deeds. As a result, that individual would return home without having his Ṣalāh accepted.

It is also strange that everyone standing behind the Imām knows they cannot finish their Ṣalāh until the Imām does. Yet, all of them, except a few, race him in bowing and prostration driven by the devil's deception and their undervaluation of Ṣalāh."[87]

Based on the proofs mentioned above, Muslim scholars held that perfecting bowing and prostration is an obligation and a pillar of

[86] Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī: (631).
[87] Kitāb al-Ṣalāh by Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal quoted in Ṭabaqāt al-Hanābilah: (Vol 1, P.353).

Ṣalāh, thereby failing to deliver it adequately renders one's Ṣalāh invalid and must be repeated. There are many recurrent proofs concerning this matter, and I shall only list here one of them that has been transmitted by many scholars. The distinguished Imām Abū Yūsuf, a disciple of Imām Abū Hanīfah, said,

> **"Calmness in Ṣalāh, which is achieved through perfecting bowing, prostration and settling the spine in-between them, is an obligation, and the lack of which makes Ṣalāh invalid."**[88]

Every Muslim must preserve and perfect his prayer. He must perform its requirements, pillars, obligations, and recommended actions adequately. Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, says,



> **"Indeed, the believers have prospered, the ones who humble themselves in their prayer."** [Sūrah Al-Mu'minūn (23):1-2]

Allāh The Almighty says,

[88] Reported by Shaykh Sulaymān ibn ʿAbdullah ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAbdul Wahhāb in his book Al-Tawdīḥ An Tawḥīd al-Khallāq: (260-261).

﴿ حَٰفِظُواْ عَلَى ٱلصَّلَوَٰتِ وَٱلصَّلَوٰةِ ٱلْوُسْطَىٰ وَقُومُواْ لِلَّهِ قَٰنِتِينَ ۝٢٣٨ ﴾

"Observe [performing] the prayers, and the middle prayer, and rise up devoutly to Allāh." [Sūrah Al-Baqarah (2):238]

Allāh The Almighty says,

﴿ فَوَيْلٌ لِّلْمُصَلِّينَ ۝٤ ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ عَن صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ ۝٥ ﴾

"So, woe to the ones who pray, but are unmindful of their prayers," [Sūrah Al-Mā'ūn (107):4-5]

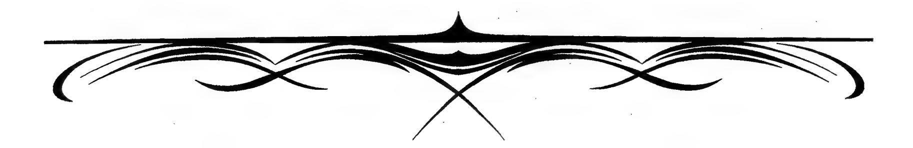
In his interpretation, Ibn Kathīr said,

"They would be 'unmindful of their prayers' by delaying the Ṣalāh to the end of its prescribed time, by not performing the Ṣalāh with adequate observance of its pillars and conditions in the manner ordered by Allāh, or by neglecting humility and contemplation in the Ṣalāh. Anyone who partially does a few of these inadequacies would be a part of a hypocrite; otherwise, utter hypocrisy is the destiny of whoever does all of those inadequacies."[89]

[89] Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr: (Vol.8, P.493).



THE PROHIBITION OF IMITATING ANIMALS DURING THE ṢALĀH

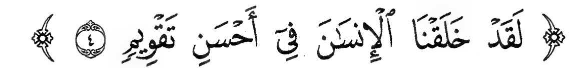


Allāh has honored the children of Adam. He created them in the best form. Allāh, Glorified be He, says,

﴿ ۞ وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِىٓ ءَادَمَ وَحَمَلْنَٰهُمْ فِى ٱلْبَرِّ وَٱلْبَحْرِ وَرَزَقْنَٰهُم مِّنَ ٱلطَّيِّبَٰتِ وَفَضَّلْنَٰهُمْ عَلَىٰ كَثِيرٍ مِّمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيلًا ٧٠ ﴾

"We have honored the children of Adam and carried them by land and sea; We have provided good sustenance for them and favored them, specifically above many of those We have created." [Sūrah Al-ʾIsrāʾ (17):4]

Allāh The Almighty also said,



"We create man in the finest state." [Sūrah Al-Tīn (95):4]

Unlike many animals walking on four legs and picking food only by their mouths, Allāh originated man to walk in an upright posture and eat with his hands. Allāh granted man hearing, sight, and intellect to benefit from them and spot differences to discern the good from the bad as far as the worldly and religious aspects are concerned.

A believer must understand the high position and honor Allāh has granted him above all other creatures. He must not denigrate himself by imitating animals, especially in Ṣalāh. The Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) prohibited the imitation of animals during all positions of Ṣalāh. He forbade one's looking here and there like a fox, resting one's forearms on the ground like a predator, squatting like a dog, pecking like a crow, allocating the same place for prayer like a camel gets used to a particular place, and gesturing with hands like the tails of headstrong horses (when saying the Salam). Ṣalāh is communicating intimately to your Lord. It is a connection between the worshipper and his Lord and Protector. Therefore, he must perform it the perfect way.

Ahmad (ibn Hanbal), Abū Dāwūd, and al-Nasā'ī narrated on the authority of `Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Shibl who said,

عَنْ نَقْرَةِ الْغُرَابِ، وَعَنْ فَرْشَةِ السَّبُعِ، وَأَنْ يُوطِنَ الرَّجُلُ الْـمَكَانَ الَّذِي يُصَلِّي فِيهِ كَمَا يُوطِنُ الْبَعِيرُ.

"Pecking like a crow, resting one's forearms on the ground like a predator, and allocating the same place for prayer like a camel gets used to a certain place."[90]

Al-Nasāʾī narrated on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik who reported that Allāh's Messenger said,

اعْتَدِلُوا فِي السُّجُودِ، وَلَا يَبْسُطْ أَحَدُكُمْ ذِرَاعَيْهِ بَسْطَ الْكَلْبِ.

"Be balanced in the prostration, and let one of you not spread his forearms (on the ground) in the Ṣalāh like the spreading of the dog."[91]

Abū Dāwūd narrated on the authority of Abi Hurayrah said,

يَعْمِدُ أَحَدُكُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِ، فَيَبْرُكُ كَمَا يَبْرُكُ الْـجَمَلُ

"(Does) one of you kneel down in his prayer as a camel kneels down (i.e., put his knees before his hands)"[92]

Ahmad (ibn Hanbal) and others narrated on the authority of Abū Hurayrah, who said,

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[90] Musnad Ahmad: (1553), Abū Dāwūd, (862), Al-Nasāʾī: (1112), Ibn Maja: (1429), and al-Albānī graded it as sound in his "Ṣaḥīḥah"(1168).
[91] Al-Sunan Al-Kubra: (702) and al-Tirmidhī graded it as sound (276).
[92] Al-Sunan: (841), Ahmad: (8955), al-Tirmidhī: (269), al-Nasāʾī: (1090), and al-Albānī graded it as sound in Ṣaḥīḥ Sunnan Abū Dāwūd': (789).

أَمَرَنِي رَسُولُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بِثَلَاثٍ، وَنَهَانِي عَنْ ثَلَاثٍ....وَنَهَانِي عَنْ نَقْرَةٍ كَنَقْرَةِ الدِّيكِ، وَإِقْعَاءٍ كَإِقْعَاءِ الْكَلْبِ، وَالتِفَاتٍ كَالتِفَاتِ الثَّعْلَبِ.

"The Messenger of Allāh ordered me to do three (good habits), and forbade me to do three (bad habits) ..., and forbade me to peck like a rooster (i.e., perform prostration really fast), to squat as like a dog, and to turn around here and there (during Ṣalāh) like a fox."[93]

Imām Muslim, Ahmad (ibn Hanbal), and al-Nasāʾī narrated on the authority of Jābir ibn Samurah who said,

مَا بَالُ هَؤُلَاءِ يُسَلِّمُونَ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ كَأَنَّهَا أَذْنَابُ خَيْلٍ شُمْسٍ أَمَا يَكْفِي أَحَدَهُمْ أَنْ يَضَعَ يَدَهُ عَلَى فَخِذِهِ ثُمَّ يَقُولَ السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمُ السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ

"We used to pray behind the Messenger of Allāh, and we would greet (others) with our hands. He said: 'What is the matter with those who greet (others) with their hands as if they were tails of wild horses? It is sufficient for any one of you to put his hand on his thigh and say: "As-salamu 'Alaikum, as-salāmu 'Alaikum."[94]

[93] Musnad Ahmad: (8106) and al-Albānī graded it as sound in "Ṣaḥīḥ al-Traghīb": (555).
[94] Muslim (431), Ahmad (20806), al-Nasāʾī (1185) and in 'al-Kubra': (1109).

A Crow's pecking is when a worshipper touches the land with his nose or forehead like a crow does, then raises his head quickly without achieving calmness in prostration.

Resting like a predator is when a worshipper spreads out his arms like a wild beast and has his elbows touching his flanks.

Allocating a specific place like a camel is when a worshipper allocates the same place for prayer as a camel gets used to a particular place.

Dog's squatting is when a worshiper puts his posterior on the ground, extends his legs, and puts his hands on the ground.

Looking here and there like a fox is forbidden during Ṣalāh. The Prophet said it is what Satan steals from the prayer of anyone of you.

Wild horses are the ones that do not settle. They are continuously moving their legs and tails. Here, it refers to the negligence of calmness (by raising the hands to greet others on both sides while saying the Salam) like a wild horse.

In addition to the animal mentioned above imitations, al-Ṣanʿānī listed another one: bending the head down like a donkey when bowing. He cited a ḥadīth reported by Abū Saʿīd who said,

وَإِذَا رَكَعَ أَحَدُكُمْ فَلَا يُدَبِّحْ تَدْبِيحَ الْحِمَارِ، وَلْيُقِمْ صُلْبَهُ

"When any of you bows, let him not bend his head down like a donkey."[95]

[95] Al-Sunan Al-Kubra, by Al-Bayhaqī: (Vol 2, P.121).

Although this ḥadīth is weak, there is a sound ḥadīth proving this point. Imām Muslim narrated on the authority of ʿĀʾishah who said,

إِذَا رَكَعَ لَمْ يُشْخِصْ رَأْسَهُ، وَلَمْ يُصَوِّبْهُ

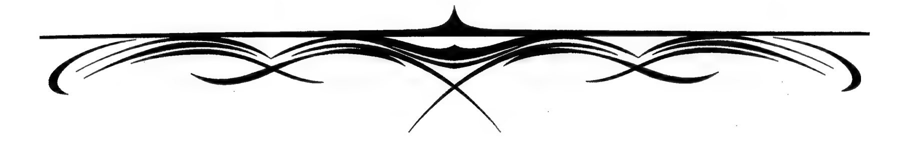
"When he (the Prophet) bowed, he neither kept his head up nor bent it down but kept it between these extremes."[96]

After all, Islām honors Muslims and elevates their position by prohibiting them from imitating animals, especially in the honorable times of the Ṣalāh, during which the servant bows and prostrates with humility to Allāh. Muslims must elevate themselves highly above imitating the moves of beasts. May Allāh guide us all.

[96] Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim: (498).



GIVE US COMFORT BY THE ṢALĀH



Ṣalāh imparts comfort to its adorers, given the intimate communication with the only One able to provide comfort, rest the troubled hearts, and put the tormented souls at ease. To remember and submit oneself to Him is bliss, especially when one is closest to Him, namely prostrating. The Prophet (ﷺ) knew that his real comfort lies in Ṣalāh, so he said,

يَا بِلَالُ! أَرِحْنَا بِالصَّلَاةِ

"O Bilal, call the Iqāmah for prayer: give us comfort by it."[97]

[97] Narrated by Ahmad (23088), Abū Dāwūd (4985), and al-Albānī graded it as sound in his "Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi`: (7892).

A true believer finds his peace and comfort in Ṣalāh, while a heedless person finds it difficult. He performs Ṣalāh just for the sake of getting rid of it as if he holds a piece of burning wood. The most beloved Ṣalāh to his heart is the shortest one, where he finds no peace and comfort despite his healthiness and free time. Once a servant finds his comfort in something, it becomes challenging for him to abandon it. So, the Ṣalāh is the most burdensome act on a person filling his heart with worldly love instead of the hereafter.

It is worth knowing that the Ṣalāh that provides peace and comfort contains six cornerstones:

Sincerity: The servant's sole motive for the Ṣalāh is his genuine desire to please Allāh, to ask for His companionship, to seek His love, and to obey His commands. The motive should not be for the sake of a worldly gain. Instead, it should be for seeking the Face of his Lord, the Most Exalted, fearing His punishment, and hoping for His forgiveness and reward.

Truth and Admonition: In the Ṣalāh, the servant must free his heart and devote himself to Allāh. He must concentrate his efforts on performing it correctly inwardly and outwardly. The outward aspect of Ṣalāh is its visible movements and audible sayings. Its inward aspect is humility, mindfulness, freeing the heart, and devoting oneself to Allāh so that the heart would not turn to anyone else but Him. Both (inward and outward) resemble the body and the soul; one cannot live without the other. Does not a servant feel ashamed to face his Lord in that a form? Ṣalāh engulfs the servant as a piece of cloth covers the body. If imperfect, Ṣalāh would scorn the servant and say, "May Allāh, let go waste of you

as you let go waste of me." But if perfect, inwardly and outwardly, it will ascend to Heaven shining like the sun till it is brought (to judgment) before Allāh, and He would accept it. Then it would say, "May Allāh preserve you as you preserved me."

Following and compliance: The servant should be keen to follow the example of the Prophet (صَلَّىٰ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) in his Ṣalāh, to perform it the exact way the Prophet did while neglecting the novelties people introduced in Ṣalāh that had never been done by the Prophet nor his companions.

Ihsān (i.e., perfection or Benevolence): The servant should worship Allāh as if he sees Him. This state branches off to the ultimate belief in Allāh, His names, and His attributes. Once achieved, the servant sees Allāh above the heavens, above the Throne ordaining His commands and prohibitions, disposing of the affairs of His creations, sending down His judgments (from heavens) to His servants and their actions are set before Him (for judgment). He (the servant) witnesses all of this by his heart; he witnesses Allāh: The Superb Upright Sustainer, the Ever-Living, the Ever-Hearing, the Ever-Beholding, the Ever-Mighty, and the Ever-Wise. He witnesses the One Who loves and hates, gets pleased and gets angry, does whatever He decides, and judges (according to) whatever He wills. He (Allāh) is above the Throne. Not a thing of His servant's actions, sayings, or inwards is concealed from Him. Instead, He knows the treacherous (look) of the eyes and whatever the hearts conceal.

Allāh's Grace: The servant should testify that if it were not for Allāh's Grace, he would not have been guided to perform the Ṣalāh correctly, his heart (would not have been freed), and his

body (would not have handled) Allāh's service. If it were not for Allāh, not a thing of that would have happened. The Prophet's companions used to enchant, "By Allāh, if it were not for Allāh, we would not have been guided, paid charity, nor performed Ṣalāh."

Allāh said,

﴿ يَمُنُّونَ عَلَيْكَ أَنْ أَسْلَمُوا قُل لَّا تَمُنُّوا عَلَيَّ إِسْلَامَكُم بَلِ اللَّهُ يَمُنُّ عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْ هَدَاكُمْ لِلْإِيمَانِ إِن كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿١٧﴾ ﴾

"They consider it a favor to you that they have accepted Islām. Say, "Do not consider your Islām a favor to me. Rather, Allāh has conferred favor upon you that He has guided you to the faith if you should be truthful." [Sūrah Al-Hujurāt (49):17]

Allāh The Almighty guided the Muslim to live Islām, and He guided the one who performs the Ṣalāh. The Prophet Ibrahim says,

﴿ رَبَّنَا وَاجْعَلْنَا مُسْلِمَيْنِ لَكَ وَمِن ذُرِّيَّتِنَا أُمَّةً مُّسْلِمَةً لَّكَ ﴾

"Our Lord, and make us Muslims [in submission] to You and from our descendants a Muslim nation [in submission] to You." [Sūrah Al-Baqarah (2):28]

Allāh also says,

﴿ رَبِّ ٱجْعَلْنِي مُقِيمَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ وَمِن ذُرِّيَّتِي ﴾

"Lord! Make me one who keeps up the prayer and of my offspring (ones who keep up the prayer)." [Sūrah Ibrahim (14):40]

It is by Allāh's Grace that He made His servants keep up Ṣalāh. It is one of His great gifts bestowed upon the servants. Allāh says,

﴿ وَمَا بِكُم مِّن نِّعْمَةٍ فَمِنَ ٱللَّهِ ﴾

"And whatever favor you have, (then) it is from Allāh." [Sūrah Al-Naḥl (16):53]

and says,

﴿ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ حَبَّبَ إِلَيْكُمُ ٱلْإِيمَٰنَ وَزَيَّنَهُۥ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ وَكَرَّهَ إِلَيْكُمُ ٱلْكُفْرَ وَٱلْفُسُوقَ وَٱلْعِصْيَانَ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلرَّٰشِدُونَ ۝٧ ﴾

"Allāh has endeared faith to you and made it beautiful to your hearts; He has made disbelief, mischief, and disobedience hateful to you. It is people like this who are rightly guided." [Sūrah Al-Hujurāt (49):7]

This is one of the most significant cornerstones of the Ṣalāh, likely to secure the ultimate benefits to the servant. The more the servant believes, the more significant share of this cornerstone he acquires. It hinders the heart from indulging in self-conceit. If the servant believes that it is only Allāh Who has guided him and has

provided him with His grace, self-conceit would never affect him. He would not tower over people nor speak profusely about in crowds.

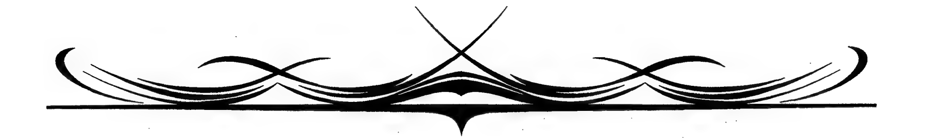
Dereliction: If the servant exerted his best efforts in doing Allāh's commands, he would still be a derelict as Allāh's rights are far greater than the efforts done. The greatness of Allāh deserves more submission and worship.

If the servant deems himself a derelict in his worship, he would then devote himself to asking Allāh for forgiveness. He would, by default, exert more efforts. This cornerstone is governed by four pillars: pure intention, powerful determination, aspiration, and fear. Any lapse in one or all of them would definitely affect the servant's belief, worship, inwardly and outwardly.

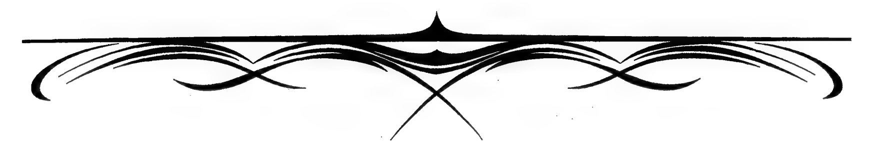
The wise servant should set these four (pillars) before his eyes and integrate them into his behavior and attitude to manifest on his knowledge, actions, sayings, and deeds. They are the safety boat; whoever abandons them would drown. May Allāh guide us all to achieve them.[98]

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[98] Adapted loosely from 'Risālah ibn al-Qayyim 'ilā 'Aḥad 'Ikhwānih': (59-71).



THE ONES WHO IN THEIR ṢALĀH ARE HUMBLY SUBMISSIVE



In this verse, Allāh shows the reasons and paths for His servants' success and happiness. Allāh calls on all Muslims to embrace the characteristics of the believers. Humility in Ṣalāh is at the top of such characteristics. It means mindfulness when standing before Allāh in Ṣalāh, feeling His closeness to rest the heart, impart peace to the soul, decrease movement, and fixate the face [at a specific point]. In this manner, one achieves mindfulness of every movement from the start of the Ṣalāh till its end and comprehends all he says and does while performing it, the fruit of which is cleansing the mind from ill thoughts and devil's whispers. This is the core and purpose of the Ṣalāh; as a Ṣalāh without humility and mindfulness is like a spiritless body.

Herewith I highlight a tremendous hidden meaning of [Allāh's] names and attributes only the servants who sailed deeply in the sea of the Glorious Qur᾿ān and whose hearts are filled with belief,

can unravel. They can assign each part of Ṣalāh a compatible name or an attribute [of Allāh].[99] To explain, when (the servant) stands before Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, he becomes mindful of Allāh's Self-Sufficiency; when he says "Allāhu Akbar," he realizes his [Lord's] Pride; when he says,

سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ وَبِحَمْدِكَ، تَبَارَكَ اسْمُكَ وَتَعَالَى جَدُّكَ، وَلَا إِلَهَ غَيْرُكَ

> **"Glory is to You O Allāh, and praise. Blessed is Your Name and Exalted is Your Majesty. There is none worthy of worship but You,"**

he realizes by his heart a deity Who is together far from any imperfection or defect and Who is worthy of praise. This praise entails attributing to Him every perfection and deeming Him above any imperfection.

تَبَارَكَ اسْمُكَ

Blessed is His Name that, whenever mentioned, multiplies the few, blesses the good, cease the calamities, and defeats the devils.

وَتَعَالَى جَدُّهُ

Exalted is His Majesty: it means that His Greatness is above all, His rank rises above all, and His authority surpasses all. He is without an associate in His Kingship, Lordship, Divinity, Actions, or Attributes.

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[99] Adapted from "Kitab Al-Ṣalāh" By Ibn Al-Qayyim. (P.141 forward).

When the servant says,

أَعُوذُ بِاللهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

"I seek refuge in Allāh from the cursed Satan," he resorts to Allāh's protection and seeks refuge in His strength to overcome the enemy who wishes to sever the ties between him and his Lord. When the servant says,

> **"Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of the universe,"** Allāh the Most High replies, **"My servant has praised Me."** And when he (the servant) says, **'The Most Compassionate, the Merciful,'** Allāh the Most High says, **'My servant has lauded Me.'** And when he (the servant) says, **'Master of the Day of Judgment,'** Allāh remarks, **'My servant has glorified Me."**

How great is the sweetness the servant tastes in his heart, the delight his soul feels, and the comfort that overwhelms him by the saying of Allāh "**My servant**" three times! By Allāh, if it were not for the sins and lusts that covered the hearts and clouded the soul, the servant would have felt the ultimate happiness and delight induced by the saying of his Lord and Creator,

(حَمِدَنِي عَبْدِي) وَ(أَثْنَى عَلَيَّ عَبْدِي) وَ(مَـجَّدَنِي عَبْدِي)

> **"My servant has praised Me," "My servant has lauded Me," and "My servant has glorified Me."**[100]

[100] Narrated by Muslim: (395).

The servant's heart would then realize the three overarching Names of Allāh: Allāh, the Lord, and the All-Merciful. The Name "Allāh" invites the realization that there is none worthy of worship but Allāh. He is the One to Whom the faces are subservient, the creatures are subjected, and the voices are stilled.

﴿ تُسَبِّحُ لَهُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتُ ٱلسَّبۡعُ وَٱلۡأَرۡضُ وَمَن فِيهِنَّۚ وَإِن مِّن شَيۡءٍ إِلَّا يُسَبِّحُ بِحَمۡدِهِۦ ﴾

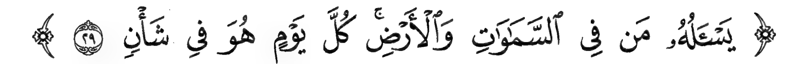
"The seven heavens and the earth and everyone in them glorify Him. There is not a single thing that does not celebrate His praise." [Sūrah Al-Isrā' (17):44]

﴿ وَلَهُۥ مَن فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِۖ كُلّٞ لَّهُۥ قَٰنِتُونَ ٢٦ ﴾

"And to Him belongs whoever is in the heavens and the earth; all are devout to Him." [Sūrah Al-Rūm (30):26]

The name "Lord of the worlds invites the realization of a deity Who is Ever-Lasting Lord Who originated everything and observes every soul. He (the Lord) rose above the Throne. He retains the exclusive right of arranging the matters of His creation. He governs everything, and all fates are in His Hands. The Angels execute His commands, granting and withholding, promoting and demoting [the ranks], giving or taking lives, grasping and

outspreading, giving or removing sovereignty, saving from the agony, and answering the distressed [when they call upon Him].



"Whoever is in the heavens and the earth ask Him; every day He is upon some (momentous) affair." [Sūrah Al-Raḥmān (55):29]

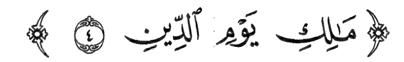
None can deny that which He bestows, and none can bestow that which He holds back. None reverses His judgment, and none can alter His Words. The angels and the [Holy] Spirit (Gabriel) ascend to Him. His servants' deeds are brought to judgment before Him at the beginning and at the end of every day. Fates take place in their designated time and place.

The Name **"All-Merciful"** invites the realization of a beneficent deity and gives His servants limitlessly. He has encompassed everything [with] His Knowledge and Mercy. His Grace and Bounty encompasses every creature of His. By His Mercy, He (the Lord, the All-Merciful) rose above His Throne, created His creatures, revealed His scriptures, sent His messengers, ordained His religion, and created Paradise and Hellfire. His Mercy is the tool by which He guides His servants to His Paradise, and by which He removes the sins of the believers. It is also His prison in which He throws His enemies.

When contemplating Allāh's orders, prohibitions, commands, and decrees, we find that He has bestowed upon us His conclusive Mercy and favors. His Mercy is the connection He extends to reach His servants. In return, His servants direct their worship

exclusively to Him. Interestingly, one of the most peculiar features of the Name **"All-Merciful"** is imparting the quality of mercy in one's heart during Ṣalāh. It is the very mercy by which Allāh guided him to stand before Him and talk to Him intimately. Also, it is through mercy that Allāh made his [servant] heart desires Ṣalāh while others were reluctant.

When he (the servant) says,



"The Possessor of the Day of Judgment," he realizes the Glory that is worthy to none but Allāh, The Supremely Evident Truth. He realizes the Supreme Master over His creatures. The One to Whom all creatures are subjected, all faces are subservient, and all tyrants are humbled. If the individual refrains from denying Allāh's attribute of absolute possession, he will realize the essence of [Allāh's other] Names and Attributes whose denial entails the denial of Allāh's absolute possession. The right and true Possessor must be Ever-Living, Sustainer, Ever-Hearing, and Ever-Beholding. He governs and possesses everything, ordains His commands and prohibitions, and rises above the Throne of His Kingdom. He sends his messengers to every corner of His Kingdom to deliver His Word. He confers His pleasure, praise, and honor on whoever deserves His pleasure. In contrast, He directs His anger, punishment, humiliation, and disgrace towards anyone deserving of His anger. He punishes whomever He wills, bestows mercy on whomever He wills, gives whomever He wills, draw the pious to Him, and distances away whomever He wills. He possesses the abode of punishment: Hellfire, and the abode of

happiness, that is Paradise. Accordingly, denying or discrediting the essence of the above amounts to a direct slandering of Allāh's attribute of absolute possession, Glorified and Exalted, as well as a denial of Allāh's Perfection. Similarly, denying Allāh's destiny involves a denial of His attribute of absolute possession and Perfection.

When he (the servant) says,

﴿ إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ۝٥ ﴾

"You only do we worship, and You only do we beseech for help," he comprehends that this verse contains the secrets of the creation, the command, this worldly life, and the Hereafter. It includes the sublime purpose, which is worshipping Allāh, and the best mean, which is supporting the servants. Indeed, there is none worthy of worship but Him (Allāh), and there is none capable of supporting His servants but Him. Worshipping Him is the loftiest purpose and His support is the most effective mean.

This verse contains the two types of Tawḥīd: *Al-Rubūbiyyah* (the Lordship of Allāh) and *al-'Ulūhiyyah* (Oneness of Allāh). It also includes the act of worshipping Him by mentioning His Names **"the Lord"** and **"Allāh."** Allāh is worshipped because of His Oneness, and His help is sought because of His Lordship. He guides to the straight Path because of His Mercy. The head of the Surah mentioned the three Names **"Allāh," "the Lord,"** and **"the All-Merciful"** as a clear indication of the servants' need of Allāh; a need to worship Him, to seek His support, and obtain His Guidance. And it is only Him Who can deliver such needs.

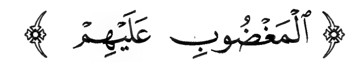
When the supplicant calls upon Allāh, saying,

﴿ ٱهۡدِنَا ٱلصِّرَٰطَ ٱلۡمُسۡتَقِيمَ ٦ ﴾

"Guide us in the straight Path," he admits his wretched and hopeless condition and his need for this supplication in every breath and blink, for he knows that the desired result of this supplication cannot be achieved except through the guidance to the path to Allāh, Exalted. It is superior guidance manifesting in creating the will, the ability, and the actual act to do it in the manner Allāh wishes. It also protects the supplicant from committing what nullifies his acts during and after performing them.

The servant needs this guidance in every aspect and condition in his life. He needs it to repent from the deeds he did while he was astray and acquire the detailed knowledge of something he previously had a general notion about it. The servant needs this guidance in the future just as he needed it in the past. In other words, one needs to acquire knowledge on things he is clueless about to do them in their prescribed form. Furthermore, even if the individual is guided to do something correctly, he still needs to [ask Allāh] to remain steadfast. Accordingly, Allāh mandated asking Him for guidance various times a day and night.

Then, Allāh showed that the rightful grantees of His guidance are those whom He favored apart from,



"the ones against whom Allāh is angered" who knew the right path but did not follow it. Add to the latter those who,



"gone astray;" they ignorantly worshiped other than Allāh. Both parties took part in falsely attributing statements to Allāh about His Creation, Names, and Attributes without knowledge. The path of the ones whom Allāh has favored conflicts with the path of the people of falsehood regarding knowledge and deeds.

After the servant finishes this supplication, infused with the praise and Oneness of Allāh, it is customary to seal this act by saying, **"Amin."** If the individual's utterance of Amin synchronizes with that of the angels, (his past sins will be forgiven). Saying **"Amin"** is considered an adornment of Ṣalāh as it reflects compliance with the Sunnah, reverence for the commands of Allāh, an act of worship for the hands, and a sign for transitioning to another pillar of Ṣalāh. The next thing is that the servant sincerely talks to his Lord, carefully listens to the Imām, and perform the Ṣalāh with his present heart.

The most favorable remembrance in Ṣalāh is voiced when standing upright, which is also the most favorable. It features praising and glorifying Allāh and reciting His Words, Exalted. So, it is prohibited to recite Qur'ān while bowing or prostrating because they are positions of submission and humbleness. For this reason, certain kinds of supplication that fit these positions were prescribed. It is permitted for the servant when bowing to mention the greatness of his Lord while he is kneeling and humbling himself before Him.

The best remembrance to ever be said during bowing is,

سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الْعَظِيم

"Glory be to my Lord the Exalted." Allāh, Exalted, and Glorified ordered his servants to say it. The Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ), Allāh's ambassador to His servants, designated the position of bowing for this remembrance.

لَمَّا نَزَلَتْ ﴿ فَسَبِّحْ بِٱسْمِ رَبِّكَ ٱلْعَظِيمِ ﴿٩٦﴾ ﴾ قَالَ: (اجْعَلُوهَا فِي رُكُوعِكُمْ)

"When the verse "*Glorify the name of your mighty Lord*" was revealed, the Messenger of Allāh said, 'Use it when bowing,"[101]

The secret [of using it when] bowing is that the servant glorifies the Lord by his body, heart, and soul. That is why the Prophet said,

أَمَّا الرُّكُوعُ؛ فَعَظِّمُوا فِيهِ الرَّبَّ

"So far as Bowing is concerned, extol in it the Great and Glorious Lord."[102]

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[101] Narrated by Ahmad (17414), Abū Dāwūd (869), and al-Albānī graded this hadith as weak in "Daʿīf Abū Dāwūd: (152).
[102] Narrated by Muslim: (479).

Then, the servant raises his head, returning to the perfect position (i.e., standing upright). The mark of this position is praising and glorifying Allāh, as the servant initiates it by saying,

سَمِعَ اللهُ لِـمَنْ حَمِدَهُ

"Allāh hears the praise of those that praised Him." It means that Allāh accepts and answers (the praise) as it is followed by the (servant's) saying,

رَبَّنَا وَلَكَ الْـحَمْدُ، مِلْءَ السَّمـوات وَمِلْءَ الأَرْض، وَما بَيْـنَهُمـا، وَمِلْءَ ما شِئْـتَ مِنْ شَيْءٍ بَعْـدُ

> **"O, our Lord and the praise is Yours in quantity as great as the heavens, and in quantity as great as the earth, and in quantity as great as whatever is between them both, and in quantity as great as You wish from anything else."**

It is worth noting that the coordinating conjunction "**and**" mentioned at the beginning of this remembrance must not be omitted. As stated in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ*[103], it indicates that there are two complete phrases. The first phrase is **"O our Lord,"** as it implies calling on Allāh, 'You are the Lord, the King, the Superb Upright Sustainer Whom in His Hands are the fates of everything, and to Him, all Commands are returned.' The implied meaning in **'O our Lord'** is then coupled with the second complete phrase **'and the praise is Yours,'** which indicates the believer's belief

[103] Narrated by al-Bukhārī: (689) and Muslim: (411).

that "**His the dominion and His is the praise.**" The Prophet then concludes his statement by admitting the magnitude of this praise in quantity and quality as he says, "**in quantity as great as the heavens, and in quantity as great as the earth, and in quantity as great as whatever is between them both, and in quantity as great as You wish from anything else.**" It is a praise that fills the upper worlds and the lower worlds and space in-between them. This praise has filled the whole creations, and whatever Allāh wishes from anything else. The Prophet added,

أَهْلُ الثَّنَاءِ وَالْـمَجْدِ

"**(You Allāh) are most worthy of praise and majesty**" to tie it with the praise at the beginning of Ṣalāh and pronounce the admission of his servitude to Allāh; a condition shared by all creation. Then he added,

لَا مَانِعَ لِمَا أَعْطَيْتَ، وَلَا مُعْطِيَ لِمَا مَنَعْتَ، وَلَا يَنْفَعُ ذَا الْـجَدِّ مِنْكَ الْـجَدُّ.

> **"no one can withhold what You give or give what You withhold, and riches cannot avail a wealthy person against You."**

The Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) used to say this statement after he finished his Ṣalāh as well. He designated these two positions in recognition of Allāh's Oneness and that all the Grace is His. This recognition consists of many things:

First: Allāh, alone, possesses the Command of giving and withholding,

Second: when He gives, no one can withhold (anything from) whom He gave, and when He withholds, no one can give (anything to) whom he deprived.

Third: all riches, worldly positions, or family cannot benefit them before Allāh. Only their worship and obedience shall save them.

Then, he (the Prophet) concluded his praise saying,

اللَّهُمَّ اغْسِلْنِي مِنْ خَطَايَايَ بِالْـمَاءِ وَالثَّلْجِ وَالْبَرَدِ.

"O Allāh, wash away my sins with the water of snow and hail."

It is also the same remembrance he says in Ṣalāh's opening remembrance. He also used to ask Allāh for His Forgiveness at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of his Ṣalāh. This way, the pillar of standing (after bowing) includes all the best and most beneficial kinds of remembrance: praising Allāh, glorifying Him, taking refuge in Him from sins and wrongdoings, asking Him for His forgiveness, and admitting servitude to Him. This remembrance is self-intended at this particular pillar (of Ṣalāh) between bowing and prostration.

Next (after correctly performing the pillar mentioned above), the servant voices 'Allāhu Akbar' and descends to prostration. It was ordained in the perfect form, indicating the highest level of servitude (to Allāh). It demands most of the body limbs where each limb displays its share of servitude to Allāh. Prostration is

the secret of the Ṣalāh and its most significant pillar. It is the closure of the Rak'a. All pillars preceding it are considered like its preambles like the visiting circumambulation in Hajj, which is why the closest that the servant comes to his Lord is when he is prostrating, so his supplication would be likely to be answered.

Because Allāh has created man out of the earth, he must not disavow his origin and commit it to mind whenever challenged by his primal nature. Were [Allāh] to abandon the servant and leave him to his own accord, he would claim to himself the Pride and Greatness of his Lord. Therefore, Allāh, the Creator of man, ordered him to submit and humble himself in prostration. This would help him remember the true self and nudge him out of heedlessness.

When prostrating, the servant discovers (the meaning of touching) the earth from which he was created. He places his head, the highest and noblest part of the body, on the ground displaying the highest form of submission, surrender, and obedience to the greatness of Allāh. In a nutshell, this is the ultimate form of visible humility.

Allāh created the man from the earth and inhabited him therein. He will send him into it and will resurrect him from it yet another time. Earth is his father, his mother, and his origin. On its surface, he lives, and under its underground, he will be buried. To him, the earth has been made a place of prostration and a means of purification. So, he is ordered to perform prostration. This pillar displays the utmost form of visible submission, which unites all the body parts upon servitude to Allāh.

To prostrate adequately, one must rely on seven organs: the face, the two hands, the two knees, and the tips of the two feet. Allāh has decreed this obligation and ordered His messenger to deliver it to people. To make it more perfect, it is recommended that the servant touches the ground with his forehead. The lower body is higher than the upper body. He should also distance his organs from each other so that they would have their share of humility. Therefore, he should distance his abdomen from his thighs, his upper arm from his body sides, and not to stretches out his forearms (on the ground).

It is narrated on the authority of Abū Hurayrah that when the son of Adam falls down in prostration, Satan goes into seclusion and weeps and says:

يَا وَيْلَه! أُمِرَ ابْنُ آدَم بِالسُّجُودِ فَسَجَدَ؛ فَلَهُ الْـجَنَّةُ، وَأُمِرْتُ بِالسُّجُودِ فَعَصَيْتُ؛ فَلِي النَّارُ.

"Alas, Woe unto me, the son of Adam was commanded to prostrate, and he prostrated, and Paradise was entitled to him, and I was commanded to prostrate, but I refused and am doomed to Hell."[104]

Allāh The Almighty praised those who fall on their faces in prostration when hearing His Words while scorned those who do not prostrate. A group of scholars said it is obligatory to prostrate (when reciting the verses of prostration). Their proof is that the magicians fell in prostration once when they knew that Moses

[104] Muslim: (81).

was right. Their prostration was the reason for their salvation, happiness, and forgiveness for a past life full of magic.

Allāh The Almighty reported how all the creation prostrates to Him. He says,

﴿ وَلِلَّهِ يَسْجُدُ مَا فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ مِن دَآبَّةٍ وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ وَهُمْ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾ يَخَافُونَ رَبَّهُم مِّن فَوْقِهِمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ ۩ ﴿٥٠﴾ ﴾

"It is to Allāh that everything in the heavens and earth prostrates, every beast that moves, even the angels- they are free from arrogance. They fear their Lord above them, and they do as they are commanded." [Sūrah Al-Naḥl (16):49-50]

He also says,

﴿ أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَسْجُدُ لَهُۥ مَن فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَن فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱلشَّمْسُ وَٱلْقَمَرُ وَٱلنُّجُومُ وَٱلْجِبَالُ وَٱلشَّجَرُ وَٱلدَّوَآبُّ وَكَثِيرٌ مِّنَ ٱلنَّاسِ ۖ وَكَثِيرٌ حَقَّ عَلَيْهِ ٱلْعَذَابُ ۗ وَمَن

يُهِنِ ٱللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُۥ مِن مُّكْرِمٍ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَفْعَلُ مَا يَشَآءُ ۩ ﴿١٨﴾

"Do you not realize [Prophet] that everything in the heavens and earth prostrates to Allāh: the sun, the moon, the stars, the mountains, the trees, and the animals? So do many human beings, though, for many others, punishment is well deserved. Anyone disgraced by Allāh will have no one to honor him: Allāh does whatever He will." [Sūrah Al-Ḥajj (22):18]

The one unto whom torment will come true is the one who does not prostrate to Allāh. He shall find none to honor him because he refused to prostrate. Allāh says,

﴿ وَلِلَّهِ يَسْجُدُ مَن فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ طَوْعًا وَكَرْهًا وَظِلَٰلُهُم بِٱلْغُدُوِّ وَٱلْآصَالِ ۩ ﴿١٥﴾ ﴾

"All that is in heaven and earth prostrate to Allāh alone, willingly or unwillingly, as do their shadows in the mornings and in the evenings." [Sūrah Al-Ra'ad (13):15]

Servitude [to Allāh] is the peak of perfection a servant can achieve. His closeness to Allāh depends on his [level of] servitude. Since Ṣalāh combines all the separate forms of servitude, it is considered the [servant's] best act of worship. Prostration is Ṣalāh's best pillar and the ultimate purpose for which it was ordained. It is repeated more than any other pillar in

Ṣalāh, not to mention it is the seal of the Rak'a. Bowing was ordained as its preamble. The prophet (صَلَّىٰ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) specified the best praise and remembrance of Allāh to be said in this pillar,

سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الأَعْلَى

"**Glory is to my Lord, the Most High,**" ordained in his saying,

اجْعَلُوهَا فِي سُجُودِكُمْ

"**Use it when prostrating yourself.**" Praising Allāh by stating his Highness while the servant is collapsing on his face on the ground, is a clear admission of Allāh's Greatness. The servant admits his Lord's Glory while he is at his lowest position.

To repeat the prescribed prostration, it was necessary to separate between the two prostrations with a designated pillar (i.e., sitting between the two prostrations) in which there are specified words of praise and remembrance that fit such position, namely asking Allāh for His forgiveness, mercy, guidance, wellness, and subsistence. Such remembrance combines asking [Allāh] for the benefits of the worldly life and that of the Hereafter, and for the protection from the evils of the worldly life and that of the Hereafter. [Asking Allāh for His] mercy brings the good. His forgiveness protects from evil while His guidance brings good and fends off evil. As for His subsistence, it provides what strengthens the body, such as food and water, and what enriches the soul and heart, such as faith and knowledge.

This pillar (i.e., the separation sitting) and its designated remembrance were intended to be performed on this form. It was decreed to ask Allāh for his pardon, forgiveness, and mercy. Before it, one praises and glorifies his Lord followed by surrendering himself and admission of his Lord's perfection [through the pillar of bowing]; then, he returns to praising and glorifying Allāh [when raising his head from bowing]. He completes his humility [to Allāh] with the ultimate form of submission and surrender [through prostration]. Only one thing remains, which is asking [Allāh] to fulfill the [servant's] needs, to accept his apologies, and to grant him forgiveness. Hence, it was ordained for him to sit down [for *tashahhud*] in the same manner as a humble servant would sit on the ground before his master asking for his pardon and forgiveness for the evil his very soul incites him to commit.

As a form of servitude, prostration along with the remembrance in its features was ordained to be repeated throughout the four Rak`as because this increases one's chances to obtain his goals and achieve humility and surrender [to Allāh]. After correctly performing bowing, prostration, Qur'ān recitation, remembrance, and Takbīr, it is obligatory to sit down [for *tashahhud*] at the end of his Ṣalāh, bending his knees in humility. In this position, he greets his Lord, the Creator, with the best of words and greetings. People typically greet their kinds and high-status society members with the best of greetings. So, it is only reasonable that Allāh deserves the best of those greetings. None is worthy of such greetings and good words, but Allāh Who is Ever-Living, Ever-Lasting, Whose Sovereignty never ends.

When one says,

وَالصَّلَوَاتُ

"and all the prayers [are for Allāh]," he recognizes that none is worthy of Ṣalāh but Allāh, and that performing it for other than Him is a grave act of polytheism and disbelief.

His saying,

وَالطَّيِّبَاتُ

"and all the good things [are for Allāh]" means all the good words, deeds, attributes, and names belong to Allāh alone; for He is the Good, His Words are good, His Deeds are good, His Attributes are good, and His Names are the finest of all. Good words rise up to Him, and He lifts up the righteous deed. All good things belong to Him and come from Him and end up with Him. The Prophet (صَلَّىٰٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَعَلَىٰآلِهِوَسَلَّمَ) stated,

إِنَّ اللهَ طَيِّبٌ لَا يَقْبَلُ إِلَّا طَيِّبًا

> **"Allāh is Good, and He, therefore, accepts only that which is good."**[105]

Allāh The Almighty decreed that good women are for good men and good men are for good women. Since Allāh is the Good in the absolute sense, so all good words, deeds, attributes, and names are for Him, and none is worthy of them but Him. Even further,

[105] Muslim: (1015).

all good things stem from His Goodness. Hence, none is worthy of this good greeting but Him, Glorified and Exalted.

Since "**Peace**" is a form of greeting, Allāh ordered his servants to pray for their fellow brothers whom Allāh has favored, starting with the dearest and closest to Him (i.e., the Prophet). The conclusion of this greeting is professing the two testimonies that serve as the keys to Islām. It was designated to be the seal of the Ṣalāh. The servant starts his Ṣalāh with [saying] Takbir, then thanking, praising, and glorifying Allāh. Then he admits the belief in Allāh's Lordship and Oneness. He then concludes it by testifying that there is no God worthy of worship but Allāh and that Muḥammad is His servant and Messenger.

This invocation is designated to be at the end of Ṣalāh, but if it is more than two Rak'as, then it is ordained to be at the middle of the Ṣalāh as well. This in-between sit-down provides the worshipper with the rest and energy needed to actively perform the remainder of Ṣalāh. The words of *Taḥyyāt* (invocation recited at the middle or end of the prayer while sitting) are also used as a preamble to the Invocation of Need. After the Ṣalāh, one sits down like a humble servant asking his Lord for his dire need. Fittingly, the words of *Taḥyyāt* were ordinated as an introduction to his supplications. He should then follow this introduction by sending peace and blessings to the one through whom this nation received this grace. It is as if the one who prays beseeched Allāh the Almighty by the former's servitude and followed it by praising Him, testifying to the rightful Oneness of Allāh professing the [truth] of the message of the Prophet and sending blessings upon him. As a result, he was granted any supplication he wishes as he already did his part.

Asking peace for the Prophet and his household is meant to impart joy to the Prophet by honoring his household just as Ibrahim and his household (that includes all the prophets after him) were honored by asking peace for them. And it is the best form one should use to ask peace for the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّىٰٱللَّهُعَلَيۡهِوَعَلَىٰٓآلِهِۦوَسَلَّمَ). Once completed, the servant is ordered to ask Allāh for His refuge from all evil acts. Evil is either the torment in the Hereafter or its causes. In this regard, torment is of two kinds: Torment in the Grave and torment in the Hereafter. The reason for torment is trials, both major and minor.

The Major trials are the trial of the False Messiah and the trials of death. The Minor trial is encountered during one's life. It can be overcome by repenting to Allāh instead of the trials of death and the false messiah from which there is no return if one is overtaken by them.

After concluding these invocations, the servant is permitted to supplicate Allāh with whatever he wishes and whatever fits his needs in life and in the hereafter. Supplication before saying Salam (i.e., the final salutations in Ṣalāh) is better and more beneficial than supplications said after it. As noticed, the Prophet's supplications exhausted the entire Ṣalāh, from beginning to end. He supplicated in *'Istiftāḥ* (opening supplication), when bowing, when raising his head from bowing, when prostrating, when sitting between the two prostrations, and when sitting for *tashahhud.* He taught Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīqah [specific] supplication to say when performing Ṣalāh. He also taught Ḥussayn ibn Ali a [specific] supplication to say during his *Qunūt* (dedicated supplication) in the *Witr* Ṣalāh (a single rak'a prayed separately). When supplicating for or against some

people, the Prophet used to do while standing after bowing. He designated this position for such supplications since the servant is in the state of closeness to Allāh. When the servant stands before his Lord [during Ṣalāh], his supplications have a better chance of being answered than elsewhere.

The Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰٓ آلِهِۦ وَسَلَّمَ) was asked, "O Messenger of Allāh, which supplication is most likely to be answered?' He said,

جَوْفُ اللَّيْلِ، وَأَدْبَرُ الصَّلَوَاتِ الْمَكْتُوبَةِ

'(During) the last part of the night, and at the end of the obligatory prayers."[106]

The end of prayer may mean its last part. It may also mean after it is ended, following the Prophet's saying,

تُسَبِّحُونَ اللهَ وَتَحْمَدُونَهُ وَتُكَبِّرُونَهُ دُبُرَ كُلِّ صَلَاةٍ ثَلَاثًا وَثَلَاثِينَ.

"Say 'Subhāna l-lah,' 'Al hamdu lillāh,' and 'Allāhu Akbar' thirty-three times each after every (compulsory) prayer."[107]

In this case, it means after the end of the Ṣalāh.

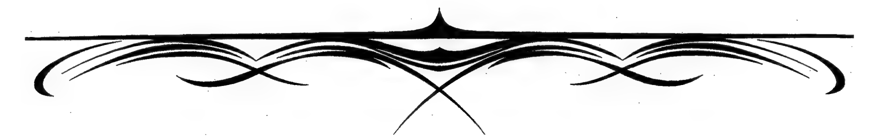
Ṣalāh is ended with saying the Salam (i.e., the final salutations in Ṣalāh). Once articulated, it means that Ṣalāh is over and that the servant is permitted to get back to his worldly life. *Salam* is a

[106] Al-Tirmidhī: (3499) and al-Albānī graded it as good in 'al-Mishkāh' (1/305)
[107] Al-Bukhārī (843) and Muslim (595).

supplication of peace uttered by the Imām. It is ordained for every Ṣalāh performer, weather his Ṣalāh was performed in a congregation or individually.



AVERTING (SATAN'S) WHISPERS



`Abdullah ibn `Anama reported, "I saw 'Ammār ibn Yāsir entering the masjid. He prayed but spent a considerably short time. After he finished, I approached him and said, 'O Abū al-Yaqzān, you have spent a short time praying.' He asked me, 'Have you seen me praying deficiently?' I answered, 'No.' He replied, "I have prayed in this manner to fend off the whispers of Satan, as I heard the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) saying,

إِنَّ الْعَبْدَ لَـيُصَلِّي الصَّلَاةَ مَا يُكْتَبُ لَـهُ مِنْهَا إِلَّا عُشْرُهَا، وَتُسْعُهَا، ثُمُنُهَا، سُبُعُهَا، سُدُسُهَا، خُمُسُهَا، رُبُعُهَا، ثُلُثُهَا، نِصْفُهَا.

'When a man finishes praying, there is only a specific portion of it that counts for him; it could be the tenth, the ninth, the eighth, the seventh, the sixth, the fifth, the

fourth, the third, or half of it [depending on his level of mindfulness during the Ṣalāh]."[108]

The less (Satan's) whispers in the Ṣalāh, the more perfect it is. Therefore, the servant needs to avert them from obtaining the total reward of the Ṣalāh. The only moments of Ṣalāh that count for him are when he is mindful. Two things could help the servant avert whispers (in Ṣalāh): undivided attention and weak distracting forces.

First: the servant should persevere in remaining attentive to each word and act he does, in contemplating the Qur'ān, remembrance, supplications, and in having in mind that he is talking to Allāh as if he sees Him. *Ihsan* is to worship Allāh as if you see Him, and if you do not achieve this state of devotion, then (take it for granted that) Allāh sees you. The more the servant tastes the sweetness of Ṣalāh, the more he gravitates towards it. The Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said,

حُبِّبَ إِلَيَّ مِنْ دُنْيَاكُمْ: النِّسَاءُ، وَالطِّيبُ، وَجُعِلَتْ قُرَّةُ عَيْنِي فِي الصَّلَاةِ.

"In this world, women and perfume have been endeared to me, and my comfort has been provided in prayer."[109]

In another hadith, he said,

[108] Related by Ahmad: (18894), Abū Dāwūd: (796), and it is graded as sound by al-Albānī in his edition of Ṣaḥīḥ Sunnan Abū Dāwūd: (761)."

[109] Ahmad (12293), al-Nasā'ī (3939), and al-Albānī graded it as sound in 'Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi' (3124).

أَرِحْنَا يَا بِلَالُ بِالصَّلَاةِ

"O Bilal, call the Iqāmah for prayer: give us comfort by it."

He did not say, 'relieve us from it.'

On a relevant note, there is a comparatively wide disparity among people regarding their knowledge, love, and fear of Allāh. They factually occupy relative levels of sincerity during worship, in their need for help, and in their belief in His commands. All of these [heart-based] attributes increase in strength whenever the servant contemplates the Qur'ān deeply, comprehends Allāh's Names, Attributes, and Greatness, and dedicates himself to Allāh where his need to worship and resort to Allāh alone becomes far more significant than his need for food and drink. The servant then realizes that his guidance [to the right path] depends on worshipping Allāh alone from Whom he seeks security and company. His remembrance gives the servant sweetness [in his heart] and makes the soul rest. These benefits cannot be obtained except by Allāh's support and guidance. Once the heart worships a God other than Allāh, it is doomed to die. It would not be revived unless Allāh wishes so. There is neither power nor strength except by Allāh, and there is no shelter from Allāh except in Him.

Second: remove the cause (for distraction). The servant should strive to avert all that distracts his heart and mind and to comprehend the causes for distractions that attracts the heart away from the core purpose of Ṣalāh. The level of distraction varies from an individual to another according to the strength of lusts

and attachments to people or things dwelling on the heart and the gravity of unadmirable things the heart tries to fend off.

Whispers are induced by either by love, as the mind recreates past events, or by desire, as the heart craves something. Sometimes disbelief and hypocrisy thoughts come across the servant's mind, but a [true] believer's heart would be filled with intense pain on account of their occurrence. The companions asked the Prophet, "Verily we perceive in our minds that which every one of us considers too grave to express. He (the Prophet) said,

أَوَجَدْتُمُوهُ؟، قَالُوا: نَعَمْ؛ قَالَ: ذَلِكَ صَرِيحُ الْإِيمَانِ.

'Have you really felt like that?' They said, 'Yes.' Upon this, he remarked, 'That is the faith manifest."[110]

Many scholars commented on this hadith that the servants' dislike of this feeling is a clear sign of true faith.

All praise is due to Allāh that the gravest of Satan's plotting is the act of whispering. When the devils of Jinn prevail, they whisper while the devils of mankind lie when they prevail. Whispers must come to [test] anyone resorting to Allāh, whether in Ṣalāh, supplication, or other acts of worship. Hence, the servant must remain firm and have patience. He must adhere to Ṣalāh and supplication as they are the means to fend off the plotting of Satan.



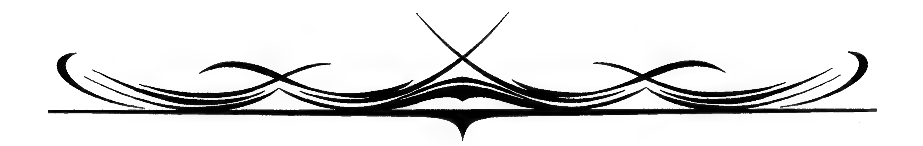
[110] Muslim (209)

> **"Indeed, the plot of Satan has ever been weak."** [Sūrah Al-Nisā' (4):76]

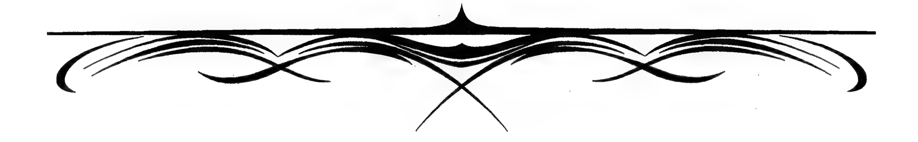
Whenever the servant turns his heart towards Allāh, whispers find different ways to him. Satan is a brigand who attacks the servant whenever he sees him walking down the path to Allāh. In an exciting incident, one of the early scholars was asked,

> **'Jews and Christians claim they are not subjected to whispers." He replied, "They told the truth; what would a devil do to an already wrecked soul." The details of what righteous people encounter down the path to Allāh are abundant and fall beyond the scope of this current work, for indeed, there is no might nor power except by Allāh, the Most High, the Great.'**[111]

[111] Adapted loosely from 'Majmū' al-Fatāwā' by ibn Taymiyyah': (22/608).

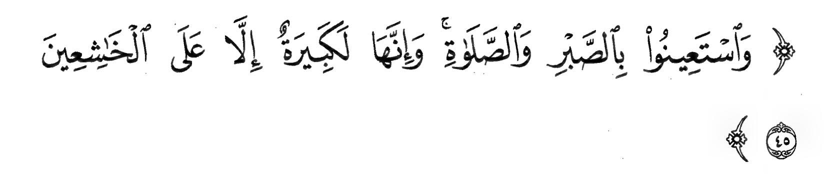


HELP AND DETERRENCE IN THE ṢALĀH



Ṣalāh is the light for the believers and the illumination for their hearts. It is the link between the servant and his Lord. If the servant performs it perfectly; observes its obligations and recommended acts, remain mindful during its performance, stands before his Lord in the form of sincere submission to Him, and keeps preoccupied with his talk with Allāh, it is no doubt that Ṣalāh (in this state) would become the strongest motive for virtues and good deeds, not to mention a great deterrent from obscenities and maleficence.

The presence (of heart and mind) in Ṣalāh creates a motive that drives the servant to obey the orders of his Lord and avoid His prohibitions. Allāh says,



“Seek help with steadfastness and prayer- although this is hard indeed for anyone but the humble.” [Sūrah Al-Baqarah (2):45]

Allāh also says,

﴿ يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱسْتَعِينُوا۟ بِٱلصَّبْرِ وَٱلصَّلَوٰةِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ مَعَ ٱلصَّـٰبِرِينَ ﴿١٥٣﴾ ﴾

“You who believe, seek help through steadfastness and prayer, for Allāh is with the steadfast.” [Sūrah Al-Baqarah (2):153]

He also says,

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ تَنْهَىٰ عَنِ ٱلْفَحْشَآءِ وَٱلْمُنكَرِ ۗ ﴾

“Surely prayer forbids obscenity and malfeasance.” [Sūrah Al-ʿAnkabūt (29):45]

Obscenity is every great sin the soul craves committing. At the same time, malfeasance is every wrongdoing that the mind and pure nature abhor.

How does Ṣalāh forbid obscenity and malfeasance? When performed flawlessly, Ṣalāh illuminates and purifies the servant's heart. It increases his belief, strengthens his will for (doing) the good, and eradicates his tendency for (doing) the bad. As a result, keeping the Ṣalāh in this perfect manner forbids obscenity and malfeasance. Besides, if done correctly, the Ṣalāh would prevent the fondness of this worldly life. It makes the heart more submissive (to Allāh). Yet, it requires the servant to recite (verses from) the Book of Allāh, so that he would contemplate and comprehend its meanings, wisdom, admonitions, and the proper conduct they instruct. Recitation of Qur'ān [during the Ṣalāh] reminds the individual of the ultimate destination of creation, either to the abode destined for reward or that destined for punishment. It endears the hereafter to the individual as well as drives him away from indulging this worldly life.

The Ṣalāh is like a preacher devoted to forbidding obscenity and malfeasance. Hence, we can grasp the goal behind distributing the Ṣalāh times throughout the day to re-ring the alarm and re-drive people away from wrongdoing. Imām Ahmad[112] narrated on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who reported,

جَاءَ رَجُلٌ إِلَى النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ: إِنَّ فُلَانًا يُصَلِّي بِاللَّيْلِ؛ فَإِذَا أَصْبَحَ سَرِقَ، فَقَالَ: إِنَّهُ سَيَنْهَاهُ مَا تَقُولُ.

"A man came to the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and said, 'So-and-so stays awake all night performing Ṣalāh, and

112 Musnad Ahmad (9778) and it is graded as sound by al-Albānī in "Al-Ṣaḥīḥah" (3482).

when the morning comes, he spends his day stealing. The Prophet replied, 'Ṣalāh (if he sincerely performed it) would have forbidden him from doing so.'"

Shaykh Al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah was asked about the hadith,

كُلُّ صَلَاةٍ لَمْ تَنْهَ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ؛ لَمْ يَزْدَدْ صَاحِبُهَا مِنَ اللهِ إِلَّا بُعْدًا

"Any Ṣalāh that does not forbid obscenity and malfeasance only increases the distance between the servant and Allāh;"[113]

He replied,

هَذَا الْحَدِيثُ لَيْسَ بِثَابِتٍ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، لَكِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ كَمَا ذَكَرَ اللهُ فِي كِتَابِهِ، وَبِكُلِّ حَالٍ؛ فَالصَّلَاةُ لَا تَزِيدُ صَاحِبَهَا بُعْدًا، بَلِ الَّذِي يُصَلِّي خَيْرٌ مِنَ الَّذِي لَا يُصَلِّي، وَأَقْرَبُ إِلَى اللهِ مِنْهُ، وَإِنْ كَانَ فَاسِقًا، لَكِنْ قَالَ ابْنُ عَبَّاسٍ: ((لَيْسَ لَكَ مِنْ صَلَاتِكَ إِلَّا مَا عَقَلْتَ مِنْهَا))، وَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: ((إِنَّ الْعَبْدَ لَيَنْصَرِفُ مِنْ صَلَاتِهِ، وَلَمْ يُكْتَبْ لَهُ مِنْهَا إِلَّا نِصْفُهَا، إِلَّا ثُلُثُهَا، إِلَّا رُبُعُهَا، حَتَّى قَالَ: إِلَّا عُشْرُهَا))، فَإِنَّ

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[113] Al-Ṭabarāni in 'al-Kabīr': (11/54), al-Qaḍā'ī in al-Shuhub: (509), and al-Albānī graded it as 'false' in 'al-Da'īfah: (2).

الصَّلَاةَ إِذَا أَتَى بِهَا كَمَا أُمِرَ نَهَتْـهُ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْـمُنْكَـرِ، وَإِذَا لَمْ تَنْهَهُ دَلَّ عَلَى تَضْيِيعِهِ لِـحُقُوقِهَا، وَإِنْ كَانَ مُطِيعًا؛ وَقَدْ قَالَ تَعَالَى: ﴿ * فَخَلَفَ مِنۢ بَعۡدِهِمۡ خَلۡفٌ أَضَاعُواْ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ ﴾ ، وَإِضَاعَتُهَا: التَّفْرِيطُ فِي وَاجِبَاتِهَا وَإِنْ كَانَ يُصَلِّيهَا، وَاللهُ أَعْلَمُ.

"This ḥadīth is not authentic. However, as stated in the Qur'ān, the Ṣalāh forbids obscenity and malfeasance. Anyways, imperfect Ṣalāh does not distance its performer away from Allāh. Instead, the person who prays (however imperfectly) is better and closer to Allāh than the one who does not pray at all. The Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said,

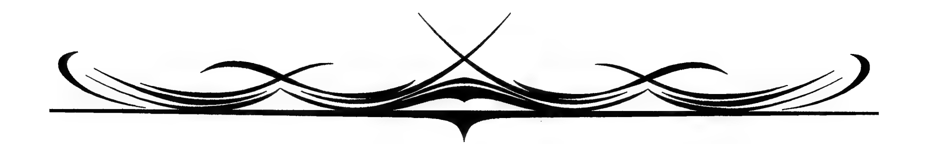
"When a man finishes praying, there is only a specific portion of it that counts for him; it could be the tenth, the ninth, the eighth, the seventh, the sixth, the fifth, the fourth, the third, or half of it [depending on his level of mindfulness during Ṣalāh]."

If the Ṣalāh does not forbid obscenity and malfeasance, the servant should know that he performed it poorly. Allāh says,

"but there came after them generations who neglected prayer."

Neglecting Ṣalāh is to perform its obligations and requirements inadequately, even if one observes praying. And Allāh knows best."[114]

[114] Majmū' al-Fatāwā' by ibn Taymiyyah': (5/22).



THE ṢALĀH IS A GREAT MEANS FOR FORGIVENESS



Forgiving sins, expiating evil deeds, and removing burdens are few drops in the fruitful sea of Ṣalāh. Imām Muslim narrated on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُ) who reported that the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَعَلَىٰآلِهِوَسَلَّمَ) said,

الصَّلَوَاتُ الْـخَمْسُ، وَالْـجُمُعَةُ إِلَى الْـجُمُعَةِ، وَرَمَضَانُ إِلَى رَمَضَانَ مُكَفِّرَاتٌ مَا بَيْنَهُنَّ إِذَا اجْتَنَبَ الْكَبَائِرَ.

"The five (daily) prayers and from one Friday prayer to the (next) Friday prayer, and from Ramadhan to Ramadhan are expiations for the (sins) committed in between (their intervals) provided one refrain from committing the major sins."[115]

[115] Muslim (233).

Additionally, Abū Hurayrah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) reported, "I heard Allāh's Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) saying,

أَرَأَيْتُمْ لَوْ أَنَّ نَهَرًا بِبَابِ أَحَدِكُمْ يَغْتَسِلُ فِيهِ كُلَّ يَوْمٍ خَمْسًا؛ مَا تَقُولُ ذَلِكَ يُبْقِي مِنْ دَرَنِهِ؟ قَالُوا: لَا يُبْقِي مِنْ دَرَنِهِ شَيْئًا؛ قَالَ: فَذَلِكَ مِثْلُ الصَّلَوَاتِ الْخَمْسِ يَمْحُو اللهُ بِهَا الْخَطَايَا.

"If there was a river at the door of anyone of you and he took a bath in it five times a day, would you notice any dirt on him?' They said, 'Not a trace of dirt would be left.' The Prophet added, 'That is the example of the five prayers with which Allāh expiates sins."[116]

Given the great extent of forgiveness in Ṣalāh, Muslims are much encouraged to ask for forgiveness in every part of Ṣalāh: during standing, bowing, and prostrating.

1- One of the *ʾIstiftāḥ* (opening) supplications is narrated by Imām Muslim[117] on the authority of Ali, who reported, "Whenever the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) started to pray, he used to say,

وَجَّهتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّذي فَطَرَ السَّموات وَالأَرْضَ حَنيفاً وَما أَنا مِنَ المشْرِكين، إِنَّ صَلاتي، وَنُسُكي، وَمَحْيايَ، وَمَماتي للهِ رَبِّ العالَمين، لا شَريكَ لَهُ وَبِذلكَ أُمِرْتُ وَأَنا مِنَ المسْلِمين. اللّهُمَّ أَنْتَ المَلِكُ

[116] Al-Bukhārī: (582) and. Muslim (283).
[117] Muslim (201).

لا إِلَهَ إِلاّ أَنْت، أَنْتَ رَبِّـي وَأَنـا عَبْـدُك، ظَلَمْـتُ نَفْسـي وَاعْـتَرَفْتُ بِذَنْبـي فَاغْفِرْ لي ذُنوبي جَميعاً إِنَّـه لا يَغْـفِرُ الذُّنـوبَ إلاّ أَنْت. وَاهْدِنـي لأَحْسَنِ الأَخْلاقِ لا يَهْـدي لأَحْسَـنِها إِلاّ أَنْـت، وَاصْـرِف عَـنّي سَيِّئَهـا، لا يَصْرِفُ عَـنّي سَيِّئَهـا إِلاّ أَنْـت، لَبَّـيْكَ وَسَعْـدَيْك، وَالخَـيْرُ كُلُّـهُ بِيَـدَيْـك، وَالشَّرُّ لَيْـسَ إِلَـيْك، أَنا بِكَ وَإِلَيْـك، تَبـارَكْتَ وَتَعـالَيتَ أَسْتَغْـفِرُكَ وَأَتوبُ إِلَـيك

'(I have turned my face sincerely towards He who has brought forth the heavens and the Earth and I am not of those who associate (others with Allāh). Indeed, my prayer, my sacrifice, my life, and my death are for Allāh, Lord of the worlds, no partner has He, with this I am commanded, and I am of the Muslims. O Allāh, You are the Sovereign, none has the right to be worshipped except You. You are my Lord, and I am Your servant, I have wronged my own soul and have acknowledged my sin, so forgive me all my sins for no one forgives sins except You. Guide me to the best of characters for none can guide to it other than You, and deliver me from the worst of characters for none can deliver me from it other than You. Here I am, in answer to Your call, happy to serve you. All good is within Your hands, and evil does not stem from You. I exist by your

will and will return to you. Blessed and High are You, I seek Your forgiveness and repent unto You).'"[118]

2- One of the supplications to be said during bowing and prostration is reported by ʿĀʾishah (may Allāh be pleased with her), "The Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّىٰٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَعَلَىٰٓآلِهِۦوَسَلَّمَ) often said while bowing and prostrating himself,

سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّنَا وَبِـحَمْدِكَ، اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي

***'Subḥanaka Allāhuma Rabana wa Bi-ḥamdik, ʾAllāhuma ighfir lī* (Glory be to You, O Allāh, our Lord, and praise be to You, O Allāh, forgive me).'"[119]**

3- One of the supplications to be said during standing upright after bowing is the Prophet's (صَلَّىٰٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَعَلَىٰٓآلِهِۦوَسَلَّمَ) saying,

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118 The transliterated Arabic version is as follows, "Wajjahtu wajhiya li ʾl-ladhî faṭara s-samāwāti wa ʾl-arḍa, ḥanīfan wa mā ana min al-mushrikīna. Inna salāti wa nusukī, wa mahyāya wa mamātī lillāhi rabbi ʾl-ʿālamīna,lā sharīka lahu. Wa bi dhālika umirtu wa ana min al-muslimīna. Allāhumma anta ʾl-maliku lā ilāha illā anta. Anta rabbī wa ana ʿabduka, ẓalamtu nafsī waʿtaraftu bi dhanbī. Faghfir lī dhunūbī jamīʿan, innahu lā yaghfiru ʾdh-dhunūba illā anta. Wahdinī li-aḥsani ʾl-akhlāqi, lā yahdī li aḥsanihā illā anta. Waṣrif ʿannī sayyiʾahā, lā yaṣrifu annī sayyiʾahā illā anta. Labbayka wa saʿdayka, wa ʾl-khayru kulluhu bi yadayka, wa ʾsh-sharru laysa ilayka, ana bika wa ilayka, tabārakta wa taʿālayta, astaghfiruka wa atūbu ilayka"

119 Al-Bukhārī : (794) and. Muslim (484).

اللَّهُمَّ لَكَ الْـحَمْدُ مِلْءَ السَّمَاءِ وَمِلْءَ الْأَرْضِ وَمِلْءَ مَا شِئْتَ مِنْ شَيْءٍ بَعْدُ، اللَّهُمَّ طَهِّرْنِي بِالثَّلْجِ وَالْبَـرَدِ وَالْـمَاءِ الْبَارِدِ، اللَّهُمَّ طَهِّرْنِي مِنَ الذُّنُوبِ وَالْـخَطَايَا كَمَا يُنَقَّى الثَّوْبُ الْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ الْوَسَخِ.

"Allāhumma lakal-hamdu mil'as-samawati wal-'ardi, wa mil'a ma shi'ta min shai'in ba'du. Allāhumma tahhirni bith-thalji wal-barad wal-ma' al-barid, Allāhumma tahhirni min adh-dhunub kama yutahhar ath-thawb al-abyad min al-Wasakh. O our Lord, the praise is Yours in quantity as great as the heavens, and in quantity as great as the earth, and in quantity as great as whatever is between them both, and in quantity as great as You wish from anything else. O Allāh! wash away my sins with the water of snow and hail, and cleanse my heart of sin as a white garment is cleansed of filth." [120]

4- One of the supplications to be said during prostration is narrated by Imām Muslim on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ), who reported, "The Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) used to say while prostrating:

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي ذَنْبِي كُلَّـهُ دِقَّهُ وَجِلَّـهُ، وَأَوَّلَـهُ وَآخِرَهُ، وَعَلَانِيَّـتَـهُ وَسِرَّهُ.

[120] Muslim (771).

'Allāhum-maghfir li dhanbi kullahu: diqqahu wa jillahu, wa 'awwalahu wa akhirahu, wa alaniyatahu wa sirrahu' (O Lord, forgive me all my sins, small and great, first and last, open and secret)."[121]

5- One of the supplications to be said during the sit between the two prostrations is reported by Ḥudhayfah, who said, "when he (the Prophet) raised his head after prostration, and sat as long as he prostrated, and said while sitting:

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي، رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي

"Rabi 'Ighfir li, Rabi 'Ighfir li (O my Lord, forgive me)."[122]

It means that he used to repeat this supplication rather than saying it just twice.

6- One of the supplications to be said before concluding the Ṣalāh with Salams (the concluding salutations) is reported that the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) used to ask for forgiveness. Imām Muslim[123] narrated on the authority of Ali who reported,

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي مَا قَدَّمْتُ، وَمَا أَخَّرْتُ وَمَا أَسْرَرْتُ، وَمَا أَعْلَنْتُ وَمَا أَسْرَفْتُ، وَمَا أَنْتَ أَعْلَمُ بِهِ مِنِّي، أَنْتَ الْمُقَدِّمُ وَأَنْتَ الْمُؤَخِّرُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ.

[121] Muslim (483)
[122] Abū Dāwūd (874)
[123] Muslim (201)

"When the Messenger of Allāh was in Ṣalāh, he used to supplicate towards the end of Ṣalāh after Tashahhud and before the concluding salutations, '*Allaahum-maghfir lee maa qaddamtu, wa maa ʾakhkhartu, wa maa ʾasrartu, wa maa ʾaʾlantu, wa maa ʾasraftu, wa maa ʾAnta ʾaʾlamu bihi minnee. ʾAntal-Muqaddimu, wa ʾAntal-Muʾakhkhiru laa ʾilaaha ʾillaa ʾAnta*. (O Allāh! Forgive my former and latter sins, which I have done secretly and those which I have done openly, and that I have wronged others and those defaults of mine about which You have better knowledge than I have. You Alone can send whomever You will to paradise, and You Alone can send whomever You will to Hellfire. None has the right to be worshipped but You)."

7- One of the supplications to be said after concluding the Ṣalāh with *Salams* is narrated by Muslim on the authority of Thawbān, who said that whenever the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) finished his prayer, he was used to asking Allāh for forgiveness three times and then add,

اللَّهُمَّ أَنْتَ السَّلَامُ، وَمِنْكَ السَّلَامُ، تَبَارَكْتَ ذَا الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ

"*Allāhumma 'Anta al-Salām wa minka al-Salām Tabārakta ya Za al-Jalāl wa al-'Ikrām* (O Allāh! You are Peace, and peace comes from You; Blessed Are You, O Possessor of Glory and Honor)."[124]

[124] Muslim (591).

Walīd reported, 'I said to al-'Awzā'ī: How does one ask for forgiveness? He replied, 'You should say, "*'Astaghfiru 'Allāh, 'Astaghfiru 'Allāh* (I beg forgiveness from Allāh, I beg forgiveness from Allāh)."

Shaykh Al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah remarked, "Asking for forgiveness obliterates sins and rescind the torment. Allāh says,

﴿ وَمَا كَانَ ٱللَّهُ مُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَهُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾ ﴾

"and in no way would Allāh be tormenting them (while) they ask forgiveness." [Sūrah Al-Anfāl (8):33]

The Prophet (ﷺ) used to ask Allāh for His Forgiveness at the beginning of Ṣalāh when reciting the *'Istiftāḥ* (opening) supplication. It is established in many Ḥadīths that the Prophet (ﷺ) asked for forgiveness in *'Istiftāḥ*, bowing, raising his head from bowing, prostration, sitting from prostration, and in *Tashahhud*. Imām Muslim narrated on the authority of Abū Huraira, who reported that the Messenger of Allāh used to say while prostrating,

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي ذَنْبِي كُلَّهِ، دِقَّهِ وَجِلَّهِ، وَأَوَّلِهِ وَآخِرِهِ، وَعَلَانِيَّتِهِ وَسِرَّهِ.

"O Lord, forgive me all my sins, small and significant, first and last, open and secret."

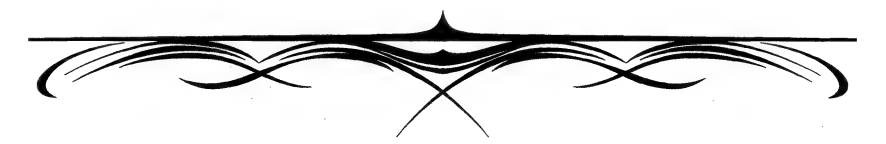
Hence, it is proven that the Prophet asked for forgiveness in every position and every pillar of Ṣalāh."[125]

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[125] Jāmi' al-Masā'il (6/ 274-275).



THE ONES TENDING THE MASJIDS OF ALLĀH



It is enough honor for the masjids that they are the houses of Allāh The Almighty [on earth]. He attributed them to Himself as a sign of their excellent and honorable position. Allāh says,

﴿ وَأَنَّ ٱلْمَسَٰجِدَ لِلَّهِ فَلَا تَدْعُوا۟ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ أَحَدًا ﴿١٨﴾ ﴾

"And that the mosques belong to Allāh, so do not supplicate, along with Allāh, anyone." [Sūrah Al-Jinn (72):18]

Allāh also says,

﴿ فِى بُيُوتٍ أَذِنَ ٱللَّهُ أَن تُرْفَعَ وَيُذْكَرَ فِيهَا ٱسْمُهُۥ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُۥ فِيهَا بِٱلْغُدُوِّ وَٱلْءَاصَالِ ﴿٣٦﴾ رِجَالٌ لَّا تُلْهِيهِمْ تِجَٰرَةٌ وَلَا بَيْعٌ عَن ذِكْرِ ٱللَّهِ وَإِقَامِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ ﴾

"shining out in houses of worship. Allāh has ordained that they are raised high and that His name is remembered in them, with men in them celebrating His glory morning and evening: men who are not distracted, either by commerce or profit, from remembering Allāh, keeping up the prayer, pay the prescribed Zakat, and fear none but Allāh." [Sūrah Al-Nūr (24):36-37]

All rulings and etiquettes concerning the masjid are concluded in Allāh's saying,

﴿ أَن تُرْفَعَ وَيُذْكَرَ فِيهَا ٱسْمُهُۥ ﴾

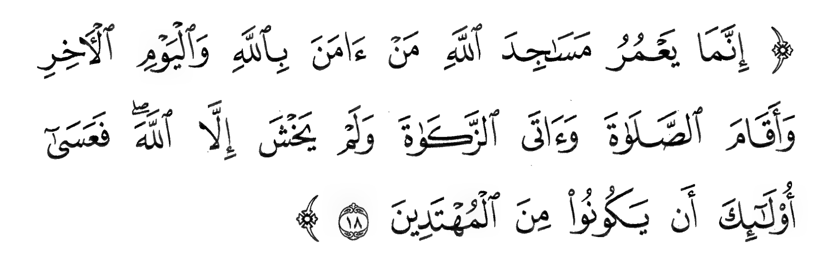
"Allāh has ordained that they be raised high and that His name be remembered in them."

This extends to their construction, cleaning, and maintenance. Remembering the Name of Allāh therein applies to performing the Ṣalāh, reciting the Qur'ān, and [holding] sessions of knowledge.

﴿ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُۥ فِيهَا بِٱلْغُدُوِّ وَٱلْءَاصَالِ ﴿٣٦﴾ ﴾

"With men in them celebrating His glory morning and evening."

It refers to those whose hearts are attached to masjids. They know the status and rights of Allāh's houses, so they uphold all of the masjids' relevant etiquettes Allāh The Almighty says,



“The only ones who should tend Allāh’s places of worship are those who believe in Allāh and the Last Day, who keep up the prayer, who pay the prescribed alms, and who fear no one but Allāh: such people may hope to be among the rightly guided.” [Sūrah Al-Tawbah (9):18]

This verse exhibits the genuine tending to the houses of Allāh, which centers around two unique requirements: the soundness of the [servant’s] faith and good conduct.

<u>The soundness of faith</u> can be deducted from Allāh’s saying,

﴿ مَنْ ءَامَنَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْآخِرِ ﴾

“**who believes in Allāh and the Last Day**.” The people of corrupt faith and deviant ideologies are in no way the real maintainers of the houses of Allāh, even if they are among the first ones rushing to perform Ṣalāh. The basis upon which the true tending of the masjids of Allāh is built is the soundness of creed and the soundness of faith. “**Who believes in Allāh**” means that the servant truly believes that Allāh is the Lord, the Creator, the All-Provider, the All-Giver, and the All-Great, and that he believes in His Most Beautiful Names, His Attributes, His

Perfection, His Glory, and His Pride. He (the servant) also believes that none worthy of worship but Allāh, to Whom he surrenders and resorts, bows and prostrates. It is Him he worships, and it is Him he asks for help. There is no shelter from Him except in Him. He calls none for aid except Allāh and sacrifices for none except [for the sake of] Allāh.

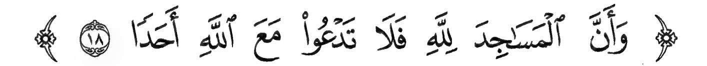
When the servant truly subscribes to those articles of belief, he now upholds sound creed and faith. If deviation troubles this firm basis, all deeds would indeed become worthless, since the cornerstone upon which maintaining the masjids depends is the soundness of faith and belief in Allāh.

It is woeful to see a grave sin being committed in some of the houses of Allāh. We see some people resorting to and invoking someone along with Allāh. One of those was heard during his Ṣalāh, and may Allāh protect us from such acts, saying while prostration "O so-and-so, aid me." He might also raise his hands [for supplication] and ask the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) or ask one of the *'Awliyā'* (pious) for help instead of Allāh. Does this fulfill the condition of sound belief in Allāh or the condition of sound faith? Allāh says,

﴿ وَلَقَدْ أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ وَإِلَى ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكَ لَئِنْ أَشْرَكْتَ لَيَحْبَطَنَّ عَمَلُكَ وَلَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلْخَٰسِرِينَ ﴿٦٥﴾ بَلِ ٱللَّهَ فَٱعْبُدْ وَكُن مِّنَ ٱلشَّٰكِرِينَ ﴿٦٦﴾ ﴾

"It has already been revealed to you [Prophet] and to those before you: 'If you ascribe any partner to Allāh, all your work will come to nothing: you will be one of the losers. No! Worship Allāh alone and be one of those who are grateful to Him." [Sūrah Al-Zumar (39):65-66]

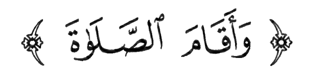
Allāh says,



"Indeed, Masjids are for Allāh alone- so do not pray to anyone other than Allāh." [Sūrah Al-Jinn (72):18]

Masjids, considered the most revered places of worship, are built on sincerity for Allāh and humbleness to His Greatness. So, it is unperceivable that a servant, who is lost and astray, resorts to the house of Allāh and prostrate therein. All the while, supplicating to or seeking the help of someone else other than Allāh, Glorified, and Exalted. Such people, even if they lived their whole life inside the masjid, their deeds would indeed become worthless as they deviated from the basis upon which all deeds and pillars of religion are built. Whoever invokes along with Allāh anyone, be he absent or dead, has indeed committed polytheism even if intended nothing beyond seeking closeness to Allāh or the intercession of that individual.

As for the good conduct, it can be concluded in Allāh's saying,



“and kept up the prayer,” both the obligatory and the recommended ones. It is also exhibited in,

﴿ وَءَاتَى ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ ﴾

“paying the prescribed Zakat” willingly to the people deserving it,

﴿ وَلَمْ يَخْشَ إِلَّا ٱللَّهَ ﴾

“and who fear no one but Allāh.” This fear inspires them to refrain from doing all prohibitions and fulfill all of Allāh’s rights. Those are verily the real ones tending the masjids of Allāh. On the other hand, those who do not believe in Allāh, the Last Day, nor fear Allāh, will in no way be counted among the ones tending the masjids of Allāh even if they claimed they are.

Masjids are the most beloved place to the heart of a believer. It is where he finds his comfort, joy, and happiness. It is where he talks to Allāh and becomes close to Him. It is where all his troubles and sins are washed away. Masjids are also the dearest parts of the earth to Allāh. The Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said,

أَحَبُّ الْبِلَادِ إِلَى اللهِ مَسَاجِدُهَا، وَأَبْغَضُ الْبِلَادِ إِلَى اللهِ أَسْوَاقُهَا

“The parts of land dearest to Allāh are its masjids, and the parts most hateful to Allāh are markets.[126]”

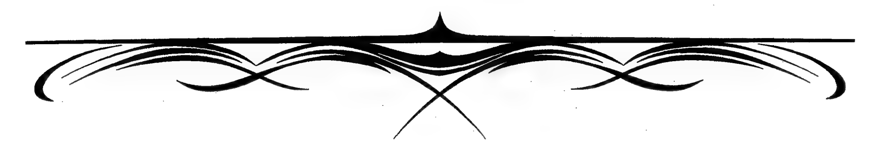
[126] Muslim (671).

They are the places where glorious and honorable acts occur. Such as performing Ṣalāh, reciting the Qur'ān, holding sessions of knowledge, and many other great acts of worship that are pleasing to Allāh. On the contrary, markets are places where forbidden transactions, bad business, and abhorrent actions occur.

Every servant, whom Allāh has favored to be among the ones tending the masjids of Allāh, should know and uphold the rights and etiquettes of masjids. In doing so, he would be counted among its sincere people who tend to it. Indeed, Allāh, alone, is the One who grants success.



PAIN IN THE HEARTS



The best and dearest place on earth to Allāh is the masjid. It is a host for all types of goodness, a place of obedience [to Allāh], and a safe haven to [renew] faith and refresh the heart. Allāh has permitted His servants to raise up the masjids so that His Name would be reiterated therein. That the Ṣalāh would be performed, and knowledge bases would be established as a beacon of light. Masjids are to be the platforms for guidance and goodness. They are the resort of the believers and the gathering place for the pious. They embrace everyone; those who invoke and supplicate [to Allāh], those who remember [Allāh], those who recite His Book, and those who are bowing and prostrating. Everyone fears a Day in which the hearts and eyes will be [fearfully] turnabout.

In masjids, the hearts find peace, souls find tranquility, the pain vanishes away, and the link between the servant and his Lord strengthens. What an incredible impact they have! They are the comfort of the believers, the warmth of the pious hearts, and the joy of Muslim souls.

Regarding their greatness and the greatness of raising them up, many texts are mentioned in the Qur'ān and Sunnah. Such texts clearly indicate the high status of masjids and the importance of cleansing and maintaining them. Allāh says,

﴿ إِنَّمَا يَعْمُرُ مَسَٰجِدَ ٱللَّهِ مَنْ ءَامَنَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ
وَأَقَامَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتَى ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَلَمْ يَخْشَ إِلَّا ٱللَّهَ ۖ فَعَسَىٰٓ
أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ أَن يَكُونُوا۟ مِنَ ٱلْمُهْتَدِينَ ١٨ ﴾

"The only ones who should tend God's places of worship are those who believe in Allāh and the Last Day, who keep up the prayer, who pay the prescribed alms, and who fear no one but God: such people may hope to be among the rightly guided." [Sūrah Al-Tawbah (9):18]

The masjid retains a great position and a high sanctity in the hearts of the believers. They know its sacredness and pay it its due care according to the strength of their belief in Allāh and the Last Day. Tending the masjid includes its construction, it's cleansing, performing Ṣalāh therein, and remembering [the Name of] Allāh, etc.... Unfortunately, pain engulfs the hearts of many Muslims nowadays. We see something that repeatedly happens inside the houses of Allāh, which induces great harm for Muslims in their Ṣalāh and acts of worship. It interrupts their humility [in Ṣalāh] and their connection with their Lord. Some people may do it heedlessly and carelessly though it is a very grave issue.

It is the [disturbing] sound of music that we repeatedly hear inside the masjid in almost every Ṣalāh. Twenty or thirty years ago, if you ask someone, "Would you imagine hearing music inside the masjid?" He would have replied that this is pure imagination. It can never happen. Who would believe this would happen inside the masjid?! O Muslims! Is this how we ended up being?! The abhorrent sound of music is heard inside the houses of Allāh! Where is the sacredness of masjids?! Where is its status in our hearts?! Where is our consideration for our fellow brothers performing Ṣalāh? Where is our fear of Allāh? Where is our reverence for the rituals of Allāh?!

Everyone carrying a cellphone could easily turn it off or put it on silent mode. However, lots of people are indifferent and care not about this. As a result, Ṣalāh performers are – constantly– hearing the sound of music while bowing or prostrating or supplicating [to Allāh]. They praise and remember Allāh, only to be suddenly interrupted by this loud noise here and there inside the masjid.

Dear cellphone owner, [remember that] masjids are sacred! Allāh says,



> **"whoever (constantly) reveres the rituals of Allāh, then surely it is of the piety of the hearts."** [Sūrah Al-Hajj (22):32]

Ṣalāh performers have rights. It is prohibited to recite Qur'ān loudly beside your fellow brother [who performs Ṣalāh next to

you so that it would not disrupt his humility and concentration]. Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) reported,

اِعْتَكَفَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي الْمَجْسِدِ فَسَمِعَهُمْ يَجْهَرُونَ بِالْقِرَاءَةِ فَكَشَفَ السِّتْرَ وَقَالَ: ((أَلَا إِنَّ كُلَّكُمْ مُنَاجٍ رَبَّهُ؛ فَلَا يُؤْذِيَنَّ بَعْضُكُمْ بَعْضًا، وَلَا يَرْفَعْ بَعْضُكُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ فِي الْقِرَاءَةِ)) أَوْ قَالَ: ((فِي الصَّلَاةِ)).

> **"The Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) made *'Itikāf* in the masjid. He heard them (the people) reciting the Qur'ān in a loud voice. He removed the curtain and said: Lo! Every one of you is calling his Lord quietly. One should not trouble the other, and one should not raise the voice in recitation or in prayer over the voice of the other."[127]**

If this is the situation with [loudly reciting] the Qur'ān, so how about such abhorrent sounds [of music]?

This unfortunate situation indicates the [Muslim's] weakness of faith, deficient religiosity, and lack of consideration of the holiness of the houses of Allāh. A man who is blessed to have a cellphone should thank Allāh for such bliss and refrain from using it in forbidden acts. Hence, it should not contain any kind of wrongful content, including music. The ringtone should not contain any musical sound because its harm grows greater when

[127] Ahmad (11896), Abū Dāwūd (1332), and al-Albānī graded it as sound in his "Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Jāmi'" (2639).

it rings inside the masjid. The houses of Allāh are sacred and must be respected. The Prophet (ﷺ) said,

قُولُوا: لَا رَدَّ اللهُ عَلَيْكَ ضَالَّتَكَ

"... when you see someone announcing [inside the masjid] about something lost, then say: 'May Allāh not return it to you."[128]

If this is the case with a simple thing like this! How about a grave sin like music [inside the masjid]? Even if the ringtone was a supplication, it would disrupt the concentration of those performing the Ṣalāh. Making them err in their recitation [of the Qur'ān] and in their supplication. The cellphone holder should remember Allāh's grace bestowed upon him and must respect the houses of Allāh. He should not make his phone a tool to harm his fellow brothers, who observe Ṣalāh.

Let us all be pious to Allāh. Let us be mindful of the acts the bring Allāh's wrath and punishment. Every one of us should fear Allāh. As soon as we enter the masjid, we should say,

بِاسْمِ اللهِ، وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللهِ، أَعُوذُ بِاللهِ الْعَظِيمِ وَبِوَجْهِهِ الْكَرِيمِ وَبِسُلْطَانِهِ الْقَدِيمِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ.

"Bismillāhi, wassalātu wassalāmu ʿalā rasūlillāhi. ʾAʿūdhu billāhi l-ʿaẓīm, wa bi-wajhihil-karīm, wa

[128] Al-Tirmidhī (13321), Ibn Maja (767), al-Nasāʾī (9933), and al-Albānī graded it as sound in his "Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Jāmiʿ" (573). This ḥadīth is reported by Abū Huraira (رضي الله عنه).

sultānihil-qadīm, min ash-shaytānir-rajīm. (In the Name of Allāh, and blessings and peace be upon the Messenger of Allāh. I seek refuge in Almighty Allāh, By His Noble Face, By His primordial power, From Satan the outcast)."

We should also put our phones on silent mode so that the abhorrent sounds not to be heard inside the houses of Allāh, The Almighty. O brother! Doing so would not delay any of your needs as long as you want to obey Allāh. Respect the sanctity of the masjid, and respect the rights of your fellow brothers who are observing the Ṣalāh.

We Ask Allāh The Almighty to guide us all to respect His houses, to make us among the ones who (continually) revere the rituals of Allāh. We beg Allāh to protect us from misusing those devices in areas displeasing to Him and to set right all our affairs as He is the Ever-Hearer of invocation. Indeed, sufficient is Allāh as a Reckoner for us, and how excellent is The Ever-Trusted Trustee. May Allāh forgive the author, the transcriber, and the reader of this book and all Muslims. May Allāh guide us to revere and keep up Ṣalāh. All praise is due to Allāh by Whom bliss one is guided to good deeds. May Allāh's peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muḥammad and his companions until the Day of Judgment.